

News snaps

2 policemen suspended

NAOGAON, Nov 22: Two policemen were suspended recently for their negligence in duty which led to the escape of an accused from the court premises, reports UNB.

The suspended policemen are Haviders Shihabul Islam and Azhar Ali. The accused who escaped from the court, was identified as Amzad Hossain of Paharpur village in Sadar thana, police said.

Mushroom growth of hotels

KISHOREGANJ, Nov 22: Mushroom growth of hotels and restaurants in all the 13 thanas of the district is posing health hazards to the local people, reports UNB.

Most of these hotels and restaurants are kept always dirty and unclean where foods are being prepared in unhygienic manner. Local people alleged that after repeated complaints, the district and thana health administrations are not paying any attention to this effect. They also said many customers have been attacked with various intestinal diseases due to intake of adulterated and unhygienic foods from these hotels and restaurants. It is also alleged that a section of officials are taking bribe from the hotel owners and shop-keepers on monthly basis.

Contractor's eyes gouged out

NOAKHALI, Nov 22: Miscreants gouged out the eyes of a contractor and tortured him mercilessly at Pataripara village in sadar thana of Laxmipur district recently, reports UNB.

Police said Nurul Amin Khan, 35, of Nandigram village came under attack at Pataripara when he was passing by the area in a motorbike at about 10-30 pm. He was admitted to Noakhali Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

Non-cooperation of Rly authorities

KURIGRAM, Nov 22: A rehabilitation project for sheltering nearly 3,000 families on abandoned railway track can not be implemented due to non-cooperation of the Railway authorities, reports UNB.

Official sources said the district administration took up the project for the families who have been living on the seven-mile abandoned section of railway track of Assam-Bengal Rail line in Bhurungamari thana. The portion of the track was abandoned following the partition of the sub-continent in 1947 as it fell inside the then East Pakistan. The initiative of the district administration under Ashrayan programme of the government could not be implemented as the railway authorities here refused to hand over the land to them. Following their refusal, the land office has asked the railway authorities to pay the outstanding land tax of Tk 1.37 crore for the last 50 years, otherwise return the land to the district authorities.

Wheat distributed

CHUADANGA, Nov 22: A total of 125 tonnes of wheat have been distributed under the VGD programme among 1,373 destitute families of four thanas of Chuadanga district during the last three months of the current financial year, reports BSS.

The four thanas of the district are Chuadanga sadar, Alamdanga, Damurhuda and Jibannagar. According to an official source, of the total wheat 25 tonnes of wheat have been distributed among 275 destitute families of Chuadanga sadar thana, 53 tonnes among the 595 destitute families of Alamdanga thana, 30 tonnes among the 320 destitute families of Damurhuda thana and 17 tonnes among the 183 destitute families of Jibannagar thana.

Judgement hailed

TANGAIL, Nov 22: Tangail district Awami League held a public meeting on Monday afternoon at Bindubasini government High School playground, reports BSS.

The meeting hailed the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case. Advocate Mirza Toazzal Hossain Mukul presided over the meeting. Advocate Shamsur Rahman Khan Shahjahan, Joint Secretary Bangladesh Awami League was the main speaker. Among others, Awami League leaders Fazlur Rahman Khan, Mohammad Faroque, Enayet Karim, Atwar Rahman Khan and Moazzem Hossain Khan spoke at the meeting. Earlier, Awami League and its front organisation brought out a procession which paraded different roads of the town.

'Boro' farming on 28,412 hectares

MANIKGANJ, Nov 22: A scheme has been taken up to bring 28,412 hectares under 'Boro' paddy cultivation in seven thanas of Manikganj district in the current season, reports BSS.

According to District Agriculture Extension Department, the production target has been fixed at 69,404 tonnes. Of the total land 6,060 hectares will be brought under 'Boro' paddy cultivation in Manikganj sadar thana, 6,560 hectares in Singair thana, 4,020 hectares in Satoriya thana, 2,850 hectares in Ghor thana, 4,100 hectares in Daulatpur thana, 2,300 hectares in Shibabala thana and 2,522 hectares in Harirampur thana. According to the Agriculture Extension Department sources, of the total land 26,785 hectares will be brought under High Yielding Variety (HYV) and 1,627 hectares under local variety.

BRAC's Cash for Work Programme

JAMALPUR, Nov 22: The non-government development organisation BRAC — has undertaken a 'Cash for Work Programme' in the rural areas of the district to create employment opportunities for the unemployed women in the aftermath of the flood, reports UNB.

A total of Tk 40 lakh has been sanctioned under the programme for employment generation for women, construction and renovation of rural roads, cleaning of derelict ponds and canals, removing sands from the paddy fields and other programmes to increase production. Some 5,000 women will be involved in the programme in 68 unions of the district. Besides, BRAC is continuing its post-flood rehabilitation programme, involving Tk 2.2 crore through its 12 regional centres and distributed 70 metric tons of rice disbursed Tk 1.25 crore interest free loan and Tk 85 lakh grant in the rehabilitation of the poultry and dairy farms, vegetable cultivation, sericulture and pisciculture.

Seed scarcity hampers 'Rabi' farming

NETRAKONA, Nov 22: Winter crops cultivation here is being seriously hampered due to seed scarcity and shortage of fund during the current season, reports UNB.

According to District Agriculture Extension Department, a total of 38,332 hectares of land have been brought under 'Rabi' crops cultivation in 10 thanas of the district. Of the total, vegetables will be cultivated on 8,800 hectares, potato on 1,700 hectares, wheat on 8,747 hectares, mustard on 10,400 hectares, maize on 205 hectares, sweet potato on 450 hectares, ground nut on 200 hectares, pea on 800 hectares, chick-pea on 620 hectares, mug on 200 hectares and mashkotal on 600 hectares. It is apprehended that the production target of 'Rabi' crops may not be achieved during the current season due to scarcity of seeds and other necessary agri-inputs.

2 killed in road accident

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 22: Two people were killed and three others injured in separate road accidents in sadar and Shahjapur thanas of Sirajganj yesterday, police said, reports APB.

In sadar, a Bogra-bound microbus from Dhaka knocked down three pedestrians at about 10 am near the police station on the western side of the Bangabandhu Bridge. Among the injured, Nur Box, 55, of south Madhupur in Ulipur thana, died at Sirajganj General Hospital. The rest were released after first-aid. Police seized the microbus but its driver managed to flee. In another incident, a 10-year-old boy, identified as Nayan, was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck on Bogra-Nagarbari Highway while crossing the road at Sharishakol in Shahjapur thana.

2 youths electrocuted

NOAKHALI, Nov 22: Two youths were electrocuted at Lamchi Prasad village in sadar thana on Friday morning, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, Khairul Monjur, 12, was electrocuted when he came in contact with a live electric wire of a broken pole while sowing seeds at a field. Another victim Mahfuzul Haque, 28, also met the same fate when he tried to save Monjur. Local people recovered the bodies. Police also said two teen-age girls allegedly committed suicide in Sadar thana last week. According to family sources, Kulsum Begum, 18, daughter of Mostafiz Mia, of Ashrafpur village allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself with her scarf on Friday when she came to learn that the bridegroom party who earlier disliked her four times came to see her again.

Mosquito menace at Natore

NATORE, Nov 22: Life has become almost unbearable for people of the town owing to increased mosquito menace, reports APB.

In absence of proper and regular cleaning of garbage and the lack of a smooth drainage system, the breeding of mosquitoes has assumed a great magnitude, the townspeople said. In particular, the Narad river flowing across the town has virtually been turned into a dumping ground as the dwellers throw their household garbage in it, they informed. The authorities of Natore pourasava, upgraded to a class-II municipality from class-III only a few years ago, is finding it an almost impossible task to effectively combat the reproduction of the insect.



MYMENSINGH: Now is the season of Aman paddy harvesting.

— Star photo.

Chalan Beel fishermen facing dry fish preservation problem

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Nov 22: Many of the professional fishermen of Chalan Beel area in the district are now engaged in selling dry fish, because they find it a profitable business.

Chalan Beel was once famous for fish of various species. A large quantity of fish was supplied to other parts of the country from here after meeting the local demand. There were also reports of preparing dry fish round the year and the required fish was supplied from here.

Now, in the rainy season the 'beel' is filled with water. Fish also come with the surging water during this period. But the popular species like 'kot', 'kaal-boush', 'shoil', 'gojar' and 'khalisha' are rarely seen. Consequently, the dry fish business has become seasonal. In the rainy season, when the price of fish falls in the market, the professional fishermen and 'mohajan' build platforms on the banks of the 'beel' for drying fish. They start drying fish from the month of October and continue upto December.

But this year, the drying process of fish is delayed because of prolonged flood, said Mossaddek Pramanik, a genuine fisherman who met this correspondent on the bank of the 'beel' in Shingra beside Natore-Bogra highway.

Mossaddek says, sometimes he himself does fishing small fish like Puti and Tengra from various parts of Chalan Beel and Hali Beel. He does the drying work on platforms and sell them to local 'mohajans' and traders from Bogra, My-mensingh, Comilla, Dhaka and Chittagong. Besides, he said, the dry fish of Chalan Beel are sold in almost all the northern districts.

Local fishermen said, over 100 platforms have been built on the banks of Chalan Beel in Shingra, Boraigram and Guru-

daspur thanas for drying fish this year. Around 30 maunds of dry fish are produced from here.

Animesh Paul, a dry fish businessman of Gurudaspur told that dry fish worth of Taka One lakh are sold from every

forties told this correspondent "My forefathers were fishermen. They were really happy. Fish was available in large number in those days. But we are facing a tough time now." Gour said that he and his six associates have been engaged in

are doing dry fish business told this correspondent about dry fish preservation problem. They have to face the risk of loss for damage of a large quantity of fish as they have no appropriate means and ways for preserving dry fish.



NATORE: Woman labourers working at a dry fish production centre near Chalan Beel in Shingra thana.

— Star photo.

platform in a season. According to this calculation, dry fish worth Taka one crore are sold from Chalan Beel areas in a season.

Gour Chandra has set up a large platform of dry fish beside Mossaddek's platform at Shingra. Gour, who is now in his late

dry fish trading for the last four years. He supplies on an average seven maunds of dry fish in a week to the wholesalers at a rate of Taka 4,000 per maund, he said. But Gour has no shed, nor any suitable arrangement for drying fish.

Many of the fishermen who

The leading fishermen in the Chalan Beel areas opine that proper marketing system and modern preservation procedures can help save a large number of dry fish. As a result the dry fish trading from here may fetch a good amount of money.

Work on Muktiyuddher Smriti Soudha in Pabna nearing completion

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA, Nov 22: The construction work on memorial of the Liberation War called "Muktiyuddher Smritisoudha" is nearing completion very fast. The plan for construction of the memorial was decided about one year

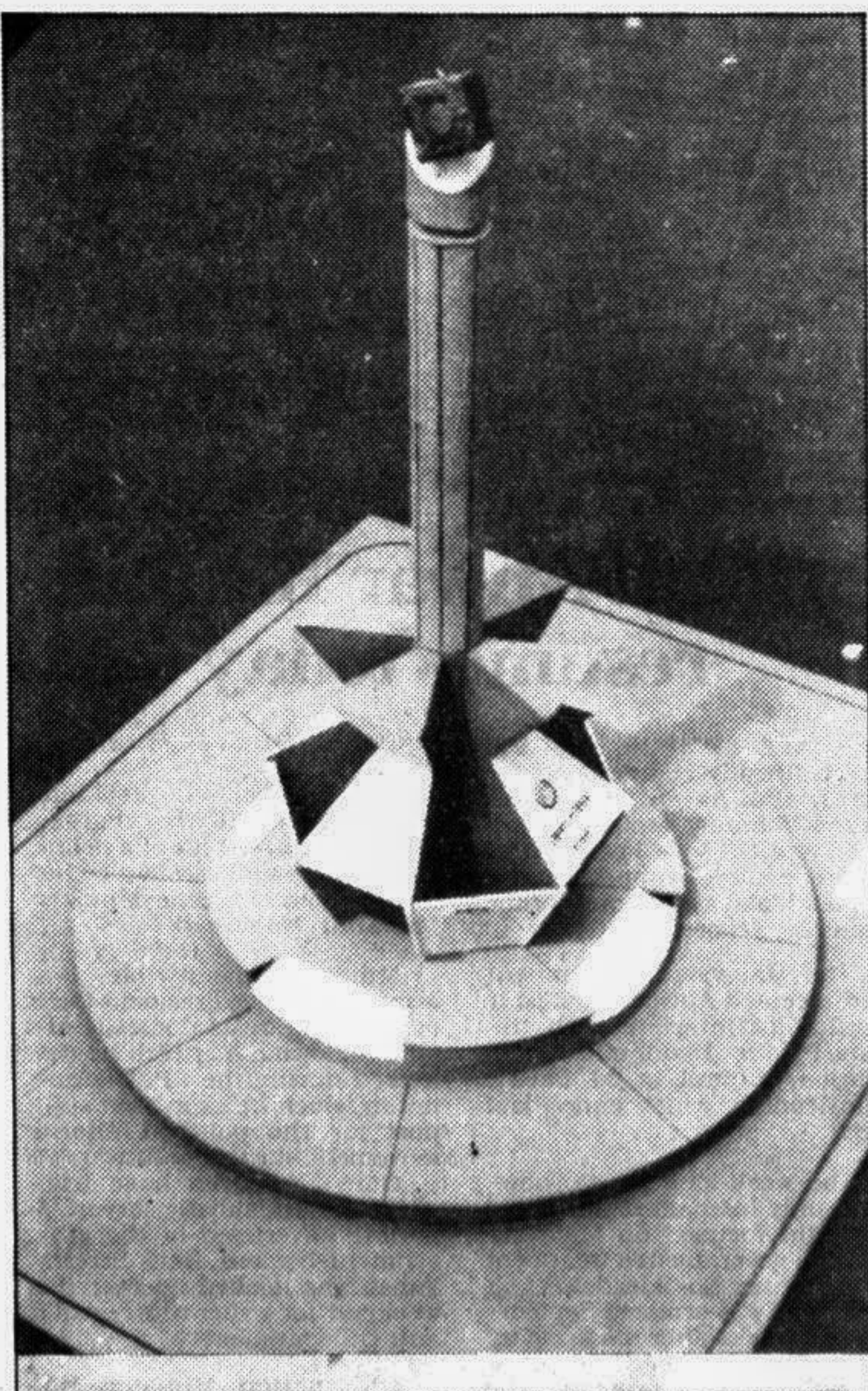
No such construction work in memory of the Liberation War was undertaken anywhere in Pabna district during the last 27 years. However, the Police Department built a memorial in memory of the martyred policemen and of the district about 15 years back on Police Parade ground which is situated near the police lines and to the west of the District and Sessions Judge court.

The construction work of the memorial has been going on on "SDO Court Maidan." Now, a three-storied new collectorate building is also being constructed near the memorial site. The old SDO court buildings have been demolished for the sake of construction of the new collectorate building.

The Central Shaheed Minar of Pabna is also situated near the site of under construction "Muktiyuddher Smritisoudha." It has a big and wide field around where cultural functions or rallies can be held in future. There will be a flower garden near the memorial.

The plan of the memorial was duly approved by the Smritisoudha construction committee comprising of all the Mps of Pabna district, representatives of various professional and women bodies and cultural organisations. The Soudha will have a height of 26 feet as a symbol of March 26, the historic Independence Day of Bangladesh. On top of it, there will be a red-green colour base, symbolising the National flag of Bangladesh.

The alter of the Memorial will be divided into seven parts marking the historic March 7, 1971, address of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The whole



PABNA: A mausoleum named Muktiyuddher Smriti Soudha will be opened soon.

— Star photo.

nation took it as a declaration of the historic War of Liberation. On this alter there will be another step, 16 feet long signifying the historic December 16, 1971, the Victory Day with all its glory. Above all, there will be a pillar, with a height of nine feet and on four sides of the pillar there will be four human faces. The nine feet pillar will signify the grim nine-month long War of Liberation and the four human faces will signify the living symbol of four state principals as enshrined in the 1972 constitution of Bangladesh. The state principals are: Democracy, nationalism, secularism and socialism.

In fact, all the historic aspects of our nine-month long armed struggle have been depicted in Muktiyuddher Smritisoudha.

Mahbubur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner of Pabna who is also a freedom-fighter and chairman of the Smritisoudha Nirman Committee told The Daily Star on Friday that the memorial would be inaugurated formally on December 16, 1998 the 27th anniversary of our victory. Colourful functions and celebrities are also being planned to make the occasion truly befitting and a memorable with massive participation of the people of Pabna.

The Deputy Commissioner further told that the names of all the martyred freedom fighters of Pabna district who laid down their lives during the nine months of our Liberation War would also be inscribed on the memorial for enabling the future generation to know the actual history of our martyrs and Liberation War.

Md Nizamuddin Khan, Deputy Chief Artist of the Sugarcane Research Institute of Ishrudi in Pabna, is the artist who has built the model of the memorial.

A total of about Taka 10 lakh is being spent for construction of the "Smritisoudha".

Two fake non-iodised salt factories unearthed

PIROJPUR, Nov 22: Two fake factories, which are producing and marketing non-iodised salt in packets bearing marks of 'iodised salt', have been detected in Nesarabad thana, reports APB.

An organised group of people has long since been operating such business at villages Dubi and Ganoman in the thana, using the names of various edible salt producing companies on their packets.

The unscrupulous owners of these unlicensed salt factories have earned at least Tk 10 crore since 1997 by driving the business.

One of the factories, located at Dubi Bazar, has been operating the fake business under the name of 'Mitali Iodised Salt Industry'. The salt produced in the factory is sold using the brand names of 'Mainamati' and 'Bata'.

The registration and phone numbers printed on the packets are found to be fake, the sources said, adding the salt sells at Tk five a kg and Tk 120 a maund.

Another such factory, Palli Salt, has been found at Ganoman in Shohagdal union.

When contacted, the officer-in-charge of Nesarabad thana told that they were aware of the matter, but could do nothing because of the intervention by the

local 'influential quarters.'

Nesarabad TNO Syed Asanul Haque also admitted the fact, while the district BISCIC manager, Mozammel Haque, said that the sample of these salt had been sent to Mohakhali in Dhaka for testing, but the report was yet to be available.

The government disbanded the production, marketing and sales of non-iodised salt in the country since 1994.

In this regard, according to the Act enacted in 1989, any one violating the law is entitled to be punished 3-year rigorous imprisonment and a fine up to Tk five thousand.

Protest meeting against hartal

MADARIPUR, Nov 22: Madaripur district unit of Bangladesh Awami League and Chhatra League (BCL) organised a protest meeting at the Puran Bazar Awami League office premises on November 15 in protest against hartal called by the opposition BNP and its allies, reports BSS.

The meeting was presided over by president of district Awami League Alhaj Fardaus Zamader.

Three violated in 2 dists

NAOGAON, Nov 22: A newly married housewife was raped allegedly by her sister's husband for 18 days keeping her confined at a house in Matajihat village in Patnitala thana, reports UNB.

Police said the victim, 16, of Mohadebpur thana had been missing since October 8 when she was going to her father-in-laws house.

They said her sister-in-law of Shibpur village interrupted on her way and took her to a nearby house and kept her confined there for 18 days.

Family sources said they suspected the hoodlum following his suspicious movement and recovered the missing victim from the house. A case was filed with the police. But the husband of the victim abandoned her following the incident.

Another report from

Jhenidah says: A girl and a teen-ager were violated in sadar and Kaliganj thanas.

Police the five years old girl of village Chutulia in sadar thana was violated by Nasir of the same village at her house in absence of other members recently.

She was later recovered in bleeding condition and sent to sadar hospital for medical test. A case was filed but the alleged rapist remained absconding.

Meanwhile, the teen-ager of village Sayedpur in Chougacha thana was ganged raped near an old graveyard at village Kash-tavanga in Kaliganj thana when she was returning home from a neighbouring village.

The villagers recovered her on hearing hue and cry for help and took her to a clinic in the town. No case was filed with the police.

Bazaars flooded with Indian goods in northern region

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 22: Many of the district town of the country's northern region have now apparently tuned into dens of organised gangs of smugglers.

These rings, sources say, have been trafficking goods worth cores of taka to different southern and eastern districts of the country from these northern towns, reports APB.

Haats and bazaars of the northern districts now stand almost flooded with narcotics and other goods of Indian origin, they said.

The rackets have been operating from such district towns as Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Joy-purhat, Kurigram, Chapainawabganj, Lalmonirhat, Iswardi, Sirajganj and Bogra.

The smuggled items from across the border include cattlehead, sares and clothings, bicycle, spare parts, life saving drugs, egg, flower, safety matches, sugar, bangle, yarn, toiletries, lock and key and spices.

These are, the sources in-

formed, usually brought into the country by means of trains, trucks, buses and other means of transport.

The goods, including phen-sidyl and other liquor, are being sold quite openly in such places as Chandaikona, Dhekurihat, Kaliahat, Pangshirhat, Shalanganhat in Belkuchi, Tarash, Uliapara and Shahjapur thanas.

Mahmudpur, Masimpur, Malshapara and Bahangabari are the localities in the town where the smuggled items are being sold with impunity.

The younger generation of the region is on the verge of destruction as they are getting addicted to the narcotics and drugs, observed the locals.

"Smuggling cannot be checked as a section of officials of the law enforcing agencies is taking 'mahosara' (monthly bribes) by issuing 'signal cards' to the traffickers," one official here told on condition of anonymity.

Taka 18 cr academic buildings' construction project in Jessore

JESSORE, Nov 22: The Facilities Department of Ministry of Education constructed a number of academic buildings in Jessore region at a cost of Tk 18 crore during the last financial year (1997-98), reports APB.

Under the construction works, academic buildings of six non-government colleges were built at a cost of Tk 2.80 crore in the region, comprising eight thanas of Jessore and three thanas of Narail districts, official sources said.

The colleges are Chougacha Mridhapara Mohila College, Bagharpara College, Mashihati College, Aluddin Degree College, Itna Mohila College and Talbaria College.

A building for commerce department of Jessore MM College was also constructed at a cost of Tk 45 lakh, they said.

One-storied buildings for 39 non-government high schools were constructed in nine

thanas, costing Tk 6.82 crore.

Nine of the buildings were constructed in Monirampur, seven in Sarsa, six in Jessore, Sadar, four each in Jhikargachha and Abhaynagar, three each in Keshabpur and Bagharpara, two in Kalia and one in Narail Sadar thana.

The department also built 26 madrasah buildings at a cost of Tk 3 crore.

Four of these were constructed in Keshabpur, five in Sarsa, three in Monirampur and two each in Abhaynagar, Bagharpara, Chougacha, Jessore Sadar, Jhikargachha, Kalia and Narail Sadar thana.

Besides, the Facilities Department constructed 25 government primary school buildings, costing Tk 2.52 crore.

Twelve of the buildings were constructed in Jessore Sadar, four in Narail Sadar and three each in Abhaynagar, Keshabpur and Monirampur thana.

7 lakh Pabna farmers deprived of an agri-loan

PABNA, Nov 22: Even though the government has embarked on a massive agricultural rehabilitation programmes, nearly seven lakh farmers of the district's char areas are being deprived of agri-loan just for lack of provision for them, reports UNB.

"The char areas were hit hard by the recent flood, but we are not getting loan," said farmers of the region.

When contacted Regional Manager of Bangladesh Krishi bank said there was no provision to provide loan in char areas.

There have been reports that many farmers are borrowing money from moneylenders at a high interest rate after being failed to get bank loan.

According to officials, six banks will distribute Tk 38.70 crore as agricultural loan

among 2,427 farmers in nine thanas of the district this year, of which Tk 7.40 crore has already been distributed.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) has distributed Tk 1.20 crore out of its target of Tk 5.83 crore. Sonal Bank Tk 36 out of Tk 4.47 crore, Krishi Bank Tk 18.45 lakh out of Tk 80 lakh, Janata Bank Tk 9.55 crore out of Tk 11.07 crore and Agrani Bank Tk 30,000 out of Tk 53 lakh.

Besides, RAKUB has distributed Tk 2.39 crore as seed loan against its target of Tk 9.76 lakh and Rupali Bank Tk 90,000 out of Tk 55 lakh. BRDB has also fixed a target to distribute Tk 2.12 crore as seed and agri-loans.

But many farmers complained that they were not getting loans from the banks for reasons unknown.