

## News snaps

### Ramgarh TNO's house attacked

KHAGRACHARI, Dec 25: Unidentified miscreants attacked the residence of Ramgarh Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) on Wednesday night, reports UNB.

TNO Jamal A Naser Chowdhury at a press conference on Thursday alleged the criminals threw bombs and bricks into his house for reasons unknown. They also hurled abuses while leaving the scene, he said. He further alleged that police came to the spot 20 minutes after receiving information over telephone.

### Two absconders arrested

PATUAKHALI, Dec 25: Police arrested two absconding criminals from Charshiba Bazar in Galachipa thana on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Police said they arrested Kaosar, 10, and Mizanur Rahman, 16, along with a Chinese axe and a toy pistol. The arrested were sent to thana hajat.

### Freshers' reception

NARSINGDI, Dec 25: Reception of fresher students and annual prize giving ceremony of Modhabdi Uchcha Balika Bidyalaya and College was held at the school and college premises on Thursday, reports BSS.

Minister Lt General (ret'd) Mohammed Nooruddin Khan attended the function as the chief guest. Former Director of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Abdul Rashid distributed prizes among the brilliant students. Presided over by the Chairman of a Madhabdi Uchcha Balika Bidyalaya managing committee Al-Haj Kapil Uddin Ahmed the function was addressed, among others, by the school's Vice-Chairman Alhaj Abdul Latif, Narsingdi City Awami League President Abdul Matin Bhuiyan and Principal Madhabdi College Abdul Ali Chowdhury.

### Erosion affected villagers in misery

RAJBARI, Dec 25: About one kilometre area of lands in five villages in Jangal and Narua unions have been eroded by Gorai river, making at least five thousand people homeless, reports APB.

The affected villages are Garaghola, Panchpota, Bangadaha, Kablatata and Taralia. Many of the affected villagers are spending days under the open sky and others have shifted to other areas. Shamsuddin LGED Executive Engineer, told that construction of a dam was necessary to stop the erosion and that he had notified the relevant authorities regarding this. Mohd Zillul Hakim, local MP, visited the affected area and promised that action would be taken. But nothing has been done so far. Local people say, unless a dam is constructed soon, thousands more will lose their homes and lands.

### Raninagar health complex ailing

NAOGAON, Dec 25: Treatment facility at Raninagar Thana Health Complex in the district is very poor as no doctor or nurse is available most of the time, patients and local people allege, reports APB.

Most of the time ward boys are only available and emergency patients from accidents have to be taken to the district town for treatment, they alleged. As per rule, at least a doctor, a staff nurse and three assistants are supposed to be available at the health complex always. Admission to the health complex is also difficult due to alleged non-cooperation of the staff. Even after admission, the patients suffer unnecessarily due to negligence of doctors and staff.

Local people say, the sorry state of the health complex is due to indifference of the district health authorities. They feel that the present staff should either be disciplined or replaced otherwise the suffering of patients will continue to grow.

### Narashundar needs dredging

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 25: The communication link of Tarail with other places of haor areas of four districts are being hampered due to absence of necessary dredging of river Narashundar during the dry season here, reports UNB.

The dredging of about seven kilometre long area of the river starting from Tarail Bazar to Chowganja is necessary to maintain the communication link of Tarail with other places of haor areas of Kishoreganj, Sylhet, Habiganj and Sunamganj districts. The century old business centre Tarail, situated on the bank of the river, lose communication link during the dry season due to drying up of the river. Local businessmen alleged that country boats with merchandise from Bhairab and other places could not reach Tarail Bazar due to absence of necessary communication link. Besides, the irrigation of ITRI-Boro field is also hindered here.

### 316 uplift schemes taken up

HABIGANJ, Dec 25: A total of 316 uplift schemes have been taken up under the rural infrastructure maintenance (Test Relief) programme in eight thanas and four pourashavas of the district in the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, some 744.5 mts of wheat have been allocated to implement the schemes, said District Relief and Rehabilitation Directorate sources. Of the total, some 31 schemes will be implemented in Bahubal thana while 50 in Churnughat, 30 in Lakhal, 48 in Madhabpur, 40 in Nabiganj, 45 in Baniachang, 22 in Azmiriganj and 36 in sadar thanas. Apart from this, some 11 schemes in Habiganj pourashava while one each in Madhabpur, Nabiganj and Shyestaganj pourashavas. The schemes include repair and reconstruction of rural roads, educational institutions, mosques and madrassas.

### Indian goods flood Sirajganj markets

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 25: The smuggled Indian goods worth crores of Taka have been flooding the markets of the northern region of the country every day, reports UNB.

The contrabands are being sold openly in each and every market before the very nose of the law enforcing agencies. According to a survey conducted by a non-government organisation, at least 2 lakh children and youths are involved in carrying and ferrying the goods in different places of the northern districts. The district are Sirajganj, Bogra, Natore, Gaibandha, Rangpur, Joypurhat, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Chapainawabganj, Pabna, Dinajpur and Rajshahi. They are working as agents of the smugglers of the border areas against a commission.

### VGF cards distributed among non-locals

BANDARBAN, Dec 25: Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) cards are allegedly being distributed to the non-locals in Naikhongchori thana here, reports UNB.

Local people complained that of the total 109 VGF cards, some 85 were given to the people who reportedly came from Burma. When contacted, the Deputy Commissioner said they have received a written complaint and stopped distribution of food grains among them. He said proper action would be taken if the allegation is found true after necessary investigation.

### Bandarban to be a tourist spot

BANDARBAN, Dec 25: Work for building up the hill district as an attractive tourist zone has been going on here, reports UNB.

Officials said there are 150 spots in the district with potentials for being developed as attractive spots for both local and foreign tourists. Under the programme, a hanging bridge is being constructed at Meghla spot at a cost of Tk 8 lakh. The government has already constructed five picnic spots and a zoo here at a cost of Tk two crore. There is also an artificial lake at the spot. Executive Engineer of Chittagong Hill Tract Development Board (CHTDB) Satyajit Chowdhury told that the hanging bridge, construction work of which was started in March last, would be opened for traffic from December 15. The district officials said a tourist motel would be constructed by the side of the spot at a cost of Tk 5 crore.

### Loan disbursed among destitutes

RAJBARI, Dec 25: The Bangladesh Palli Unnayan Board has distributed Tk 2.66 crore loans among 4,722 destitute men and women in the district under its Poverty Alleviation Programme, reports APB.

The loans were given for fisheries, cultivation, food processing, rural transportation and setting up of nurseries and cottage industries, sources in Board said. It has a target of distributing Tk 6 crore loans in the district. The Board has also planted 21,000 saplings along 21 kilometres of roads. The Rajbari Rural Development Board has distributed seeds and saplings among 400 people free of cost to help them compensate the losses suffered during the last floods. The Board has also rescheduled Tk 4 crore loans outstanding with farmers.

### 10,000 babies malnourished in Narail

NARAIL, Dec 25: At least 10,000 children in three thanas of the district are suffering from malnutrition, reports UNB.

According to a survey conducted by a non-government organisation, most of the people of Sadar, Lohagara and Kalia thanas are poor and passing their days half-fed and half-clad and lack of employment facility has aggravated the suffering of the people. Many families are reeling under innumerable problems due to abject poverty. Children of these families have become the victim of malnutrition. It has stunted the growth of a good number of children. On the other hand, many babies do not get sufficient breast feeding as the mothers are mostly malnourished and affected with diseases. As a result, children of the poor families are suffering much.

## Diarrhoea claims 2 more lives in Joypurhat

JOYPURHAT, Dec 25: Diarrhoea that broke out in an epidemic form in the district claimed two more lives in last two days, reports UNB.

The deceased were identified as Sayaton, 39, of Zonpara village and Abdul Matin, 70, of Baniapara village in Sadar thana.

According to the health department, 500 others were also attacked by the disease during the period. Local people alleged that shortage of water purification tablets, oral saline and other necessary drugs are the main causes behind the spread of the disease in new areas.

It was also alleged that per packet saline was being sold at Tk 6 in rural areas against the market price only Tk 3 only. Moreover, scarcity of IV saline is also acute in the district.

There was a stock of 480 packets of IV saline in the health centre till December 20 as against the needs of 4,000, said official sources.

Taking of adulterated food and contaminated pond water was said to be the main reasons behind the outbreak of the disease.

Local people urged the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to install new tubewells in the affected areas for ensuring safe water and set up medical camps to check the spread of the disease.

## 50 hurt in clash over paddy harvesting in Patuakhali

From Staff Correspondent  
BARISAL, Dec 25: At least 50 persons were injured, 16 of them seriously in a rival groups clash over paddy harvesting from a disputed land at west Dhankhali village in Kalapara thana of Patuakhali district recently.

According to police and witnesses, two rival groups one led by Nizamuddin and the other by Afzal Hossain were locked in clash in a disputed cropland in the village over reaping of paddy.

Both the groups' activists used lethal weapons and fire arms during the two-hour long bloody clash.

Some hired musclemen were also engaged by a group in the clash local people alleged.

Seriously injured Jainal Howlader, 48, Siddique Howlader, 45, Zahir Mridha, 18, Sagar Mridha, 25, Hafez Mridha, 75, Jahangir Mridha, 40, Selim Mridha, 45, Afzal Mridha, 35, Babul Mridha, 30, Motahar Uddin Mridha, 52, Naya Mridha, 40, Zulfiqar Ali, 30, Kuddus Howlader, 45, Md. Ali Akbar, 45, Selim Mridha, 35, and Mustafizur Rahman, 30, were admitted to local Kalapara Thana Health Complex (THC).

Later Kuddus Howlader has been transferred to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital with critical condition in an unconscious state.

Police later recovered and seized a numberless motorcycle and two rounds of pipeguns bullets from the spot.

## Despite combing drive 6 killed in S-W zone till December 9

From Staff Correspondent  
KHULNA, Dec 25: Six persons were murdered till December 9 in the southwestern zone of the country despite combing operation which was launched from December 1.

Till the time of writing of this report none was arrested. Of these murders, three were committed in Jessore district, two in Chuadanga and one in Satkhira district.

On the night of December 1, two outlaws identified as Mahnoor, 28, and Abu Hasan, 40, were slaughtered by their rival groups at Hashimpur bazaar.

On the same night, Feroze, 25, and Badal, two armed cadres of Biplobi Communist Party, were slaughtered at Alamnagar thana of Chuadanga district.

On the early morning of December 9, a businessman Saidur Rahman Saeed of Ahoyanagar in Jessore district was killed. Police recovered his dead body from rail line. On the same night, Ashraf Ali, 38, of Daulatpur village in Satkhira sadar thana was killed by unidentified assailants.

Police, of course, arrested 120 alleged terrorists and recovered 15 illegal firearms till December 8 from different places of Khulna division. In the combing operations Bagerhat district tops the list in arrest and recovery of firearms.

## Salt, sugar smuggled thru' India pose a threat to health

RANGPUR, Dec 25: Salt and sugar smuggled from India have posed a serious threat to public health because of high rate of adulteration, scientists and doctors say, reports APB.

The smuggled salt and sugar are mixed with high percentages of ammonia, which causes diarrhoea, dysentery, jaundice, impotence and other diseases.

The levels of ammonia is around 56.3 per cent. Doctors say that if the ammonia level is higher than 27.2 per cent, consumers' health may be seriously endangered.

The problem is acute in the northern districts of the country, where about three and a half lakh people have fallen victim to these diseases. This disquieting fact was revealed in a survey carried out by the Bangladesh Nuclear Medicine Centre in the northern districts. They have identified the salt and sugar smuggled from India as the main cause of spread of the diseases.



NARAYANGANJ: A children's painting exhibition on Liberation War was arranged on the Victory Day by the district administration at Narayanganj Art Institute. — Star photo

## Newly harvested onion in Faridpur markets

From Abdul Matin Fakir

FARIDPUR, Dec 25: Newly harvested onion have already been marketed.

As result the price of onion has come down to Tk 40 per kg as against Tk 60 per kg a few weeks ago.

Though Faridpur is considered as one of the best onion producing district in the country, the new harvested onions locally called "Muri Kata" have not grown well as past.

Some farmers, when they were asked, told this correspondent that the recent frequent rainfalls have caused

huge damage to onion plants in the field hampering the production.

One onion grower — Siddique Rahman of village Hazi Dangi in Char Bhadrans thana when interviewed said that he had spent Taka 10 thousand for onion cultivation on a small plot of land in this season.

He said regretting that if price of the newly harvested onions falls abnormally, his production cost will not be achieved. He also opined that price of the new variety would

abnormally fall when the onion locally called "Hali Piaj" would be harvested in the month of March or April.

Another onion-grower from Sadarpur thana said that price of the new variety of onion will not fall much during the month of Ramadan during which a huge amount of onions are consumed. Piaji, Bara and other things made from onion are the main items of the iftar. He is expecting a huge profit from onion cultivation in this season as the price of the variety is still high.

## Prices of essentials up with beginning of Ramadan

NETRAKONA, Dec 25: With the beginning of Holy Ramadan, prices of almost all the essentials have marked a significant rise in different retail markets of the district, reports UNB.

The price of vegetables is showing an upward trend while onion, which was being sold between Tk 55 and 60 some days back, now has come down following the arrival of the newly harvested variety.

The newly harvested local variety onion is being sold at Tk 40 per kg while imported one

at Tk 56 per kg in different hats and bazaars.

Brinjal and been are being sold between Tk 24 and Tk 28 against the previous price of Tk 18 and Tk 20 and potato between Tk 10 and Tk 12 per kg.

Prices of leaf vegetables have also shot up and are being sold between Tk 12 and Tk 16, tomato between Tk 40 and Tk 50.

Price of pulses has marked a slight rise. Lentil is being sold between Tk 32 and Tk 40. Of the spices, price of garlic is showing

an upward trend and being sold between Tk 50 and Tk 60 per kg.

Prices of fish remained static as the supply of fish except kai and hilsa has almost risen slightly.

Although new varieties of rice is being seen in the markets, but price did not come down.

Prices of beef and mutton remained unchanged but price of chicken is going up day by day. A chicken weighing one kg is now being sold between Tk 80 and Tk 100.

## 800 hectares brought under green chilly cultivation

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Dec 25: A total of 800 hectares of land has been brought under the cultivation of green chilli during this season in eight thanas of the district.

According to the district Agriculture Extension Department (AED) source, the production target from the cultivation was fixed at 1600 tonnes.

The source also said that all arrangements have already been made to provide the farmers with loan, fertiliser, pesti-

cide and other agricultural inputs to make the programme a success.

Thana-wise break-up of the land with production target is as follows: 220 hectares of land with 440 tonnes as production target in sadar, 55 hectares with 110 tonnes as production target in Char Bhadrans, 35 hectares with 70 tonnes as production target in Nagarkanda, 150 hectares with 300 tonnes as production target in Sadarpur, 130 hectares with 260 tonnes as

production target in Bhanga, 70 hectares with 140 tonnes as production target in Madhukhali, 110 hectares with 220 tonnes as production target in Boalmari and 30 hectares of land with 60 tonnes as production target in Alifadanga thanas.

The source also said that 225 field supervisors have been assigned in the district to supervise the cultivation to make the programme a success.



BARISAL: A grand rally of students, teachers, employees and guardians was held recently at the local Aswini Kumar Hall. The huge rally demanded a secondary and higher secondary education board at Barisal. — Star photo

## In Satkhira hospitals

## Shortage of doctors hampers health care service

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Dec 25: Health care service in government hospitals is being hampered due to lack of adequate number of doctors.

People who come for treatment to these hospitals have to look for alternative arrangements for obvious reasons.

The non-government clinics and hospitals, therefore, have been doing a brisk business.

Out of a total number of 92 sanctioned positions of physicians in different hospitals under the civil surgeon's office, as many as 22 are now lying vacant.

The positions that are lying vacant include 5 in the Sadar modernised hospital, nine in Thana Health Complexes and eight in other hospitals.

Many of the doctors do not

reside around their places of duty and do not attend their duties punctually. They reside in the town and are more interested in their private practice.

Doctors posted at sadar modernised hospital are also apparently more interested in their private practice.

As a result, private clinics and hospitals have mushroomed at Satkhira town and thana levels. Most of these private clinics and hospitals charge their patients exorbitantly and provide them with sub-standard medical services.

Locals have urged the government to ensure proper health care facilities for more than 17 lakh people of Satkhira district following recruitment of adequate number of doctors.

## If towns can meet basic needs, exodus to cities will stop

TANGAIL, Dec 25: State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury has said that the well-thought perspective plan upholding local culture and tradition of any township could help build up secondary towns to attract urban settlement, reports BSS.

He was addressing as chief guest at a seminar on 'support for implementation of the national plan of action' jointly organised by Tangail Pourashava and a non-government organisation 'Radol' at zila parishad premises here recently.

The minister said that many developing countries had made tangible progress in this regard by exploring the untapped local resources, which we could follow. If secondary towns could meet basic needs of the dwellers

the people would not rush to big cities, he observed.

Speaking on the occasion, eminent parliamentarian Abdul Mannan MP said that we must have master plan of each cities on development pursuits.

The meeting was also addressed, among others, by secretary, Ministry of Housing and Public Works Jagannath Dey, the Netherlands Ambassador in Dhaka, DCB Dem Hass, AL central leader Shamsur Rahman Khan, Radol General Secretary Syed Hasanuzzaman Loton and Tangail Pourashava Chairman Mohammad Shamsul Haque.

Later, a committee was formed titled 'Tangail Urban Plan (TUP)' with pourashava chairman as its chief and Radol representative as member-secretary.



FARIDPUR: Wife of Lutfar Rahman Faruque, ex MP, Monowara speaking recently at a meeting organised by Faruque Smrity Sangsad at the 'Eidgah' ground at Bhanga. There she demanded an exemplary punishment to the killers of her husband who was killed brutally on July 7 this year. — Star photo

## Bank loan crisis hampers industrialisation in CHT

BANDARBAN, Dec 25: No large or medium scale industry was set up in the district due to lack of bank loan facility creating frustration among the entrepreneurs, reports UNB.

There is high potentiality of setting up industries based on raw materials produced in the region including bamboo, cane, timber, ginger, lemon, pulse, orange and pineapple. The initiative would also help create employment opportunities for the people both tribal and non-tribal, said the local people.

Timber worth crores of taka is being taken to other parts of the country from the region. Besides, a huge quantity of bamboo and cane are being burnt to ashes due to the devastating fires every year. Fruits are being spoiled here and there in the absence of processing plants.

According to traders, there is a possibility of setting up many small-scale mills and factories for producing soap, candle and handloom.

Water of hill spring can be source of mineral water, processing industry which will be able to meet the entire demand of the country, they said.

A bank manager, preferring anonymity, said some interested people come to them for loan, but they cannot give them the necessary financial assistance due to various reason including procedural requirements and for different official directives.

Local businessmen urged the authorities concerned to extend financial assistance to them so that they can come forward in establishing industry for the development of the area.

## Padma erosion renders 2,000 homeless in Chapainawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Dec 25: At least 2,000 people have become homeless during the last two months due to erosion of the river Padma.

Thousands of people have already lost their homes, lands and property in five unions of the district over the years. Panic gripped the people of the affected areas as the severity of the erosion is much more this year.

Many people have already abandoned their homes as erosion took a serious turn and took shelter in Barindia area.

The affected areas include Alatuli, Narayanpur and Sundarpur unions in Sadar thana and Ujjirpur and Pacca unions in Shibganj thana of the district.

About six square miles of densely populated area went into the river within a few days time.

Besides, a total of 26 different institutions including three-storey building of Shaheed Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir College, established for years ago at a cost of Tk 60 lakh, have also been washed away by the river.

Meanwhile, many farmers could not cultivate their lands as these remained covered with a three to four feet layer of sand following the recent flood.

Local people alleged that they have not received any financial assistance from the government.

## 7-yr afforestation programme in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, Dec 25: The government has undertaken a seven-year afforestation programme on 25,000 acres of land to project the ecological balance and make the country self-reliant in forest resources, reports UNB.

Forest Department sources said, under the Forestry Sector Project, 1,000 tribal jhumia families will be rehabilitated through involving them with the project.

Each family will be provided with five acres of land to make their homesteads, kitchen gardens and horticulture.

Besides, saplings will be planted on both sides of 125km roads and highways under the project.

With the implementation of the project, production of 14 lakh cubic metre wood, 44 lakh cubic metre bamboo poles and 58 lakh cubic metre firewood would be possible annually.

Moreover, employment opportunity would be created and the forest resources based cottage industry would contribute in the economic sector, it added.

An official of the Forest Department informed that three forest departments including Sangu and Matamuhuri reserves of the district have 2.24 lakh acres of land while 4.20 lakh acres of government khas lands remained fallow.

He said after implementation of the project wild life might be protected in safe sanctuaries of the deep forest here.