

National

News snaps

Fate of Asrayan projects uncertain

PABNA, Jan 1: The fate of a good number of Asrayan projects in the district hangs in the balance due to various complications relating to land acquisition, reports UNB. The projects have been taken up in Ekdanda Baraipara, Ganti, Sara, Bhajendrapur, Dogachi, Laxminathpur, Hemayetpur, Bhabanpur, Baghchachala, Baharpur, Ramchandrapur, Khalishpur, Matka, Barakikola, Atarshova, Tailkakupi, Gangnati, Alampur, Musagari, Bishwanthpur, Laxmipur, and Shibrampur areas. The government has undertaken such Asrayan projects aiming at giving shelters to landless people across the country. Keeping the aim in view, the concerned ministry has directed the Thana Nirbahi Officers for speedy implementation of 22 projects in nine thanas of the district. But the projects could not yet make any progress, except those in Ishwardi and Suzzanagar thanas.

Prices of vegetables, essentials up

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 1: With the advent of holy month Ramdan the prices of almost all the essential commodities including vegetables have registered further rise in the markets here, reports UNB.

The incessant rainfall at the end of the last month caused extensive damage to 'Rabi' crops in 13 thanas of the district. According to Agriculture Extension Department, during untimely heavy downpour, potato on 600 hectares, mustard on 2,000 hectares, vegetables on 650 hectares, wheat on 590 hectares, 'Boro' seeds on 200 hectares were damaged extensively. Besides, onion on 40 hectares, chilli on 30 hectares and garlic on 45 hectares were damaged. As a result, acute scarcity of vegetables has been prevailing all over the district. The local consumers alleged that taking advantage of short supply, the traders increased the prices of vegetables and other essentials in the absence of proper inspection by the officials concerned.

Construction of jail going on

HABIGANJ, Jan 1: The construction work of the district jail is going on at Dhuliakhali in the outskirt of the town, reports UNB.

Public Works Department is constructing the district jail at a cost of Tk 22.37 crore. Work has started with the acquisition of 15 acres of land at the site. There will be a two-storey office building, a four-storey barrack for male prisoners, a two-storey female barrack, two hospitals for males and females, a cell for juvenile delinquents, a library, a security cell and 'hajati' cell. The construction work is likely to be completed by 2002. A sub-jail with a capacity for 157 prisoners is now being used as the district jail here.

Touchstone statue recovered

NAOGAON, Jan 1: Police arrested two men with a precious statue of touchstone from the Badalgachhi thana headquarters here on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said they challenged Altaf Hossain and Saidur Rahman following their suspicious movement and recovered the statue from their bag. In another drive CID police arrested three smugglers and seized 220 kg of Indian cumin seeds from their possession from Shahapur in Dhamirhat thana on Monday night. Acting on a tip off, police arrested Irfan Ali, Roisuddin and Md Amri of Gopalpur village in Badalgachhi thana while they were carrying six sacks of cumin seeds by a bi-cycle. Another report from Lalmonirhat adds: BDR jawans recovered a huge quantity of Indian clothes worth about Tk 10 lakh from Bulfamari camp area near the border on December 24.

Pest-attack on IRRI-Boro seedbeds

NOAKHALI, Jan 1: Widespread pest-attack on various IRRI-Boro seedbeds in most of the rural areas of the district has created panic among the farmers, reports UNB.

The Senbag and Chatkhil thanas are worst affected. Farmers have been spraying pesticides with no effect as the pesticides are mostly adulterated. The seedlings grew fast as the seedbeds are fertile this year because of accumulation of silts by floodwater. But with the pest-attack the seedlings are gradually turning yellowish and finally reducing to ashes. This correspondent visited different parts of the affected areas and talked with some farmers at Khilpara, Paikpara, Madurkhil, Karihati and Jatra, who informed him of their miseries. They said they lost their crops two times due to the devastating floods this year and would be forced to starve with their children if they loss the current IRRI-Boro crops.

321 uplift projects implemented

MUNSHIGANJ, Jan 1: A total of 321 development projects were implemented under rural infrastructure maintenance programme in six thanas and two pourasavas of the district during 1998-99 with an allocation of 570 metric tonnes of wheat, an LGRD source said, reports BSS.

Under the projects, repair of roads, erection of bamboo culverts and bridges, repair and earth-filling of the premises of places of worship and educational institutions were undertaken in the rural areas of the district. Meanwhile, another 102 uplift projects have also been taken up under Rural Infrastructure Reform Programme in six thanas. A total of 1,429 metric tonnes of wheat has been allocated for implementation of these projects, it is officially learnt.

30 uplift schemes taken up

MUNSHIGANJ, Jan 1: Thirty uplift schemes have been taken up by the zila parishad in six thanas of the district in the year 1998-99 at an estimated cost of Tk 84,86,000, an official source said, reports BSS.

The schemes include construction of pucca bridges, metalling of roads and building of approach roads, erection of union parishad buildings, construction of a shed for bus passengers at Hashara. Work on the schemes will start soon, the source informed.

Fund shortage hampers uplift work

HABIGANJ, Jan 1: Various development works under Public Works Department (PWD) in the district are being hampered due to fund shortage, reports UNB.

Official sources said five construction works were undertaken by the department this year at a cost of Tk 7.71 crore. The works include Judge Court building in the district headquarters, a Fire Service and Civil Defence office at Madhabpur thana headquarters, Thana Complex at Lakhi, Non-gazetted employees dormitory and morgue of the Sadar hospital in the town. All the works are lying unfinished due to fund constraint after the completion of only 20 to 30 per cent works, officials said.

Tk 53,195 looted from bank

JHALAKATI, Jan 1: A group of frauds fled with an amount of Tk 53,195 of Ansar-VDP from Agrani Bank here on Wednesday, reports APB.

Officials said the incident took place on Wednesday morning when two members of Ansar and VDP went to the bank to release in cash the cheque for paying the salary of the staff. As they were counting the money on the counter, the frauds drew their attention elsewhere and ran away with the money and disappeared. The bank manager ordered a search, but neither the money could be recovered nor the cheats traced.

Man killed in clash over land

ISHWARDI, Jan 1: An elderly man was killed and six others were injured in a clash over land dispute at Srirampur village in Ishwardi on Wednesday, reports APB.

The dead was identified as Abdul Khaled, 50. He sustained severe wounds and died on way to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. Witnesses said the clash ensued following an altercation between two groups of villagers over the land on Wednesday morning. Those injured in the clash included Swapna, 33, Rezaul, 35, Hasmat, 30, Abdul Barak, 42, Rashid, 40, and Majid, 45.

Workshop of UP chairmen

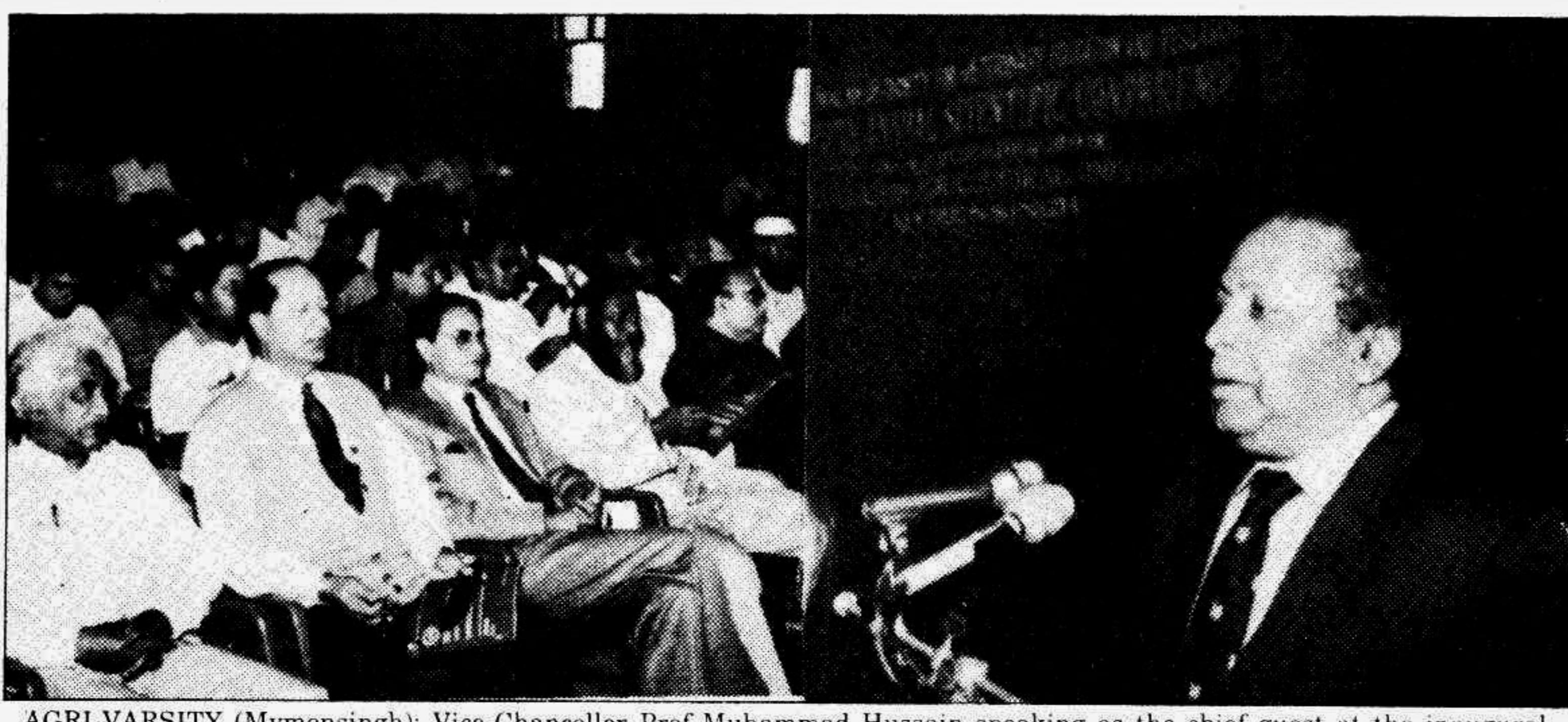
CHANDPUR, Jan 1: A two-day workshop for the chairmen of Union Parishads of the district concluded here at press club recently, reports BSS.

The workshop was held to enlighten the chairmen to help the village people aware about the diarrhoea diseases and proper use of oral saline. Health Department in cooperation with UNICEF sponsored the workshop. Eighty-nine union parishad chairmen participated in the workshop. The workshop was addressed, among others, by M Rezaul Karim, Deputy Commissioner, Dr Syed Abdul Karim, Civil Surgeon and Dr Mainul Islam.

Absconding convict arrested

MYMENSINGH, Jan 1: Police arrested Shamsuddin, an absconding convict of the sensational murder case of Lalu of Sohal village in Bhaluka thana of the district, after long 10 years, reports UNB.

Police said a group of armed terrorists brutally chopped Julmat Ali Lalu of the village to death on December 4, 1988. A case was filed with the local police and later the court awarded life imprisonment in absentia to six people in connection with the murder. Shamsuddin was arrested on December 6, said the police adding that five other convicts — Abul Kalam, Mojibur Rahman, Chan Mia, Firoz and Jamal — are still absconding.



AGRI-VARSITY (Mymensingh): Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammad Hussain speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural function of a two-day conference of Bangladesh Society for Veterinary Education and Research (BSVER) held at Zainal Abedin Auditorium of the university.

— Star photo

11 murderers awarded RI on various terms

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Jan 1: First Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Jasan Ali in a judgement recently sentenced 11 people to suffer Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) on various terms in a murder case.

Parashullah, one of the accused was awarded RI for two years with a fine of Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer simple imprisonment for two months more.

Accused Farhad and Ma-
mum were sentenced to seven years RI each with a fine of Taka 3,000 each, in default, to suffer simple imprisonment for

three months more. Accused Sadeq Sheikh, Shahab Ali, Prakash, Shahid Mushik, Kuddus Khan, Hannan Khan, Alam Prakash and Lalor Prakash were sentenced to suffer four years RI with a fine of Tk 2,000 each, in default to suffer simple imprisonment for two months more.

The prosecution story, in brief, is that the accused beat a septuagenarian Arshad Bepari severely with sticks at a public place at village Tanbul Khanha in sadar thana in the afternoon of July 3, 1997 and fled the scene leaving the victim uncon-

scious. He was later removed to Faridpur General Hospital where he succumbed.

The eldest son of the deceased, Nuruzaman filed a case with Kotwali thana accusing them. Police after investigation submitted chargesheet and the judge pronounced the aforesaid judgement after examining the witnesses and relevant papers.

The prosecution was conducted by Advocate Abul Basher Sarder P.P., while Advocate Sarwarjan Mia, Advocate Shahjahan Mia and Advocate Golam Rabbi defended the case.

But unofficial sources put both the numbers of attacked and died much higher and said at least 12 people had died in Mohadevpur thana alone during the last month. The dead include Mumun, 1, Piar, 1, Rubel, 3, and Sumana, 3, Hafizur, 24, Hira, 25, and Anwar, 24.

The officials said a number of medical teams have been working in different affected areas. Besides, the diarrhoea-affected people are being treated at different health complexes and health centres.

But people in the rural areas said they hardly find any medical team working in the affected areas. The patients have been suffering seriously due to the inadequate number of beds in the hospitals. Many of them are lying on the floors at the thana health centres.

The hospitals and health centres are already running short of intravenous fluid and other medicines necessary for diarrhoea treatment.

The patients are being forced to buy oral saline at a higher price from the market.

Diarrhoea takes alarming turn in Naogaon dist

NAOGAON, Jan 1: Diarrhoea that broke out in an alarming proportion here, reports UNB.

The news of diarrhoea has created panic among the people. District Civil Surgeon office sources said eight patients have so far died in the district since December 1 and about 4,700 had been affected. Scores of people have been rushing to the Sadar hospital for treatment.

Of the deceased, two each died in Manda, Niamatpur and Mohadevpur thanas while one each in Porsha and Patnitola.

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Body recovered

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 1: The body of a businessman who was kidnapped from his village home was found at a nearby village in Biswanath thana recently.

Police recovered the body.

Official sources said, Minar Begum, wife of the deceased Nurul Haque, 45, filed a case with Biswanath thana. In the case, she alleged that Harunur Rashid and Suddok Ali, two cousins of the deceased along with four others called out her husband from the house on the fateful night in the name of urgent purpose. Since then he had been missing. She alleged at apprehending murder and sought police help to recover the man.

Nurul Haque, 45, used to do business at Habra bazar and had a dispute over land with his cousins Harun and Suddok, wife of the victim said in the case.

Acute scarcity of LP gas in Naogaon

NAOGAON, Jan 1: Acute scarcity of the Liquefied Petroleum (LP) gas in the district has been prevailing since long causing much trouble for the families dependent on it, reports UNB.

Local people said the traders are now selling LP gas cylinders at a high rate in different areas. A cylinder is being sold between Tk 450 and Tk 550 against its original price of Tk 270.

Some dealers said the artificial crisis has been created due to supply shortage against the high demand.

But a dealer, who preferred anonymity, said that some retailers buy gas cylinder from the dealers at the fixed price with recommendations of local influential people immediately after the arrival of the shipment here. Later they sell these at a high rate to the general buyers.

They were arrested from different areas of Moulvibazar and Habiganj districts and all of them were enlisted with police as criminals.

It may be mentioned here, a society was committed in Sylhet bound Jayantika inter-city train on November 21 last year. When the inter-city train reached at a point between Sylhet and Rashidpur stations on Akhaura-Sylhet railway section at about 6.50 pm, a group of dacoits numbering 40 to 50 took away all valuable things including money at gun point from all the passengers of 10 compartments of the train. At least 15 passengers were also injured during the dacoity.

Meanwhile, the Railway authority have reconstituted a high-power three-member enquiry committee to find out causes behind the dacoity. The committee members are: Divisional Commercial Manager Abdul Razzaq Bhuiyan, Divisional Mechanical Engineer Anwar Hussain and Commandant security. They have already started investigation.

Earlier, a two-member enquiry committee was formed with Assistant Divisional Manager Ashok Kumar Dev and Assistant Commandant Enamul Haque.

According to official sources, these families affected by severe riot in Asam migrated to Sylhet and took shelter on 850 acres of land of four mouzas in the thana in 1952-53.

Each family was provided with tin shed houses, bullocks and cash for cultivation to eke out their living and relieved them of the taxes of 850 acres of land, it said.

Coconut, betel nut tress declining

KHULNA, Jan 1: Coconut and betel nut trees in the district and in neighbouring Bagerhat have been declining day by day due to the sharp rise of salinity in the soil, reports UNB.

Coconut and betel nut production has already come to almost an end in Bagerhat district due to unplanned shrimp farming in saline water.

Besides, fruit bearing trees are also perishing day by day due to adverse effect of excess saline component in the soil.

Fisheries Department officials in the district said unattended shrimp farming in the paddy fields have been posing a serious threat to environment of the region.

Owners of the shrimp firms preserve huge saline water in the shrimp fields from the sea

for increasing their production.

Due to adverse effect of salinity, arable lands in the district are losing fertility day by day declining production of coconut, betel nut and others fruits. Most of the trees in the region are near to moribund state due to the problem.

Local people alleged that widespread expansion of shrimp cultivation in these areas led to a serious destruction of mangrove forest, reduction of productivity in the crop fields, depletion of surface water and overall environmental degradation.

They urged the government to take necessary steps to control the growth of unplanned shrimp farming for the sake of saving the fruit bearing trees and food grain production.

Separate incidents kill 7 in Feni, Sylhet

FENI, Jan 1: A housewife and a young girl were killed in separate incidents in the district, police said on Thursday.

Police and family sources said a young housewife Sufia Khatun, 25, wife of Nezam Uddin of Bodipatbar village in Parshurampur thana was severely beaten up by her husband following a family feud on Dec 24.

The victim, mother of two children, was rushed to the thana health complex in an unconscious state where she succumbed after a few hours. The killer husband went into hiding.

In another incident at Mondira village in Chhagolnaya thana Parul Akhter, 17, daughter of Eshak Mia, was allegedly killed by her elder sister Monwara Begum following a quarrel over a trifling matter.

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