

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 Ekdaanda Baraipara, Ganti, Sara, Bhajendrapur, Dogachi, Laxminagar, Hemayetpur, Bhabanipur, Baghachala, Baharpur, Ramchandrapur, Khalishadah, Matka, Kabarkola, Atarshova, Tailkakupi, Ganghati, Alamnagar, Musagari, Bishwanthpur, Laxmipur, and Shubrampur 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 Suzanagar thanas.

Prices of vegetables, essentials up

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 1: With the advent of holy month Ramadan 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 here is going on at Dhulakhali in the outskirts 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 a hospital. 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

NAOAGAN, Jan 1: Police arrested two men with a precious statue of touchstone from the Badalgachi 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 Dhamoirhat thana on Monday night. Acting on a tip off, police arrested Irfan Ali, Roisuddin and M Amri of Gopalpur village in Badalgachi 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 2.5 lakh from Buhman camp area near the border on December 24.

Pest-attack on IRI-Boro seedbeds

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

The Senbag and Chakhal thanas are worst affected. Farmers have been spraying pesticides with no effect as the seedbeds are mostly adulterated. The seedlings grew fast as the seedbeds are fertile this year because of accumulation of silts by flooding water. 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 Jatrapa 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 lose the current IRI-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 the year 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 Lakhat, 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 realise 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 Khaleque, 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 Swapan, 33, Rezaul, 35, Hasmat, 30, Abdul Barez, 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 Lulu 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 Lulu 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.

11 murderers awarded RI on various terms

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Jan 1: First Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Josan 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 another three months.

Accuseds Farhad and Mamun 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.

Accuseds Sadek Sheikh, Shaheb Ali, Prakash, Shahid Mushik, Kuddus Khan, Hannan Khan, Alam Prakash and Lalon 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 Khana 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.

Winter crops farming may fall short of target in Mymensingh

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Jan 1: The farmers of the district are engaging themselves in extensive winter crops cultivation including vegetables to make up the losses caused by the last year's deluge.

During the deluge, standing crops including 'Aus', jute and 'Aman' were affected severely in the district causing huge losses to the farmers, especially to the small and marginal farmers. So, the farmers are trying desperately to recoup the losses by cultivating various winter crops including potato, maize, sweet potato, mustard, groundnut and various pulses and vegetables.

However, the District Agriculture Extension Department (AED) took up an extensive winter crops cultivation programme in all 12 thanas of the district.

The thanas are: Sadar, Muktagacha, Trishal, Phulbaria, Bhaluka, Gafargaoan, Nandail, Iswarganj, Gouripur, Halaughat, Phulpur and Dubaura.

According to AED official sources, 500 hectares of land have been brought under maize

cultivation in the district with a production target of 2250 metric tons (MT) of maize, 7,100 hectares under mustard cultivation with a production target of 67,000 MTs, 3,500 hectares under potato cultivation with a production target of 42,000 MTs, 900 hectares under sweet potato with a production target of 9,000 MTs, 500 hectares under groundnut cultivation with a production target of 950 MTs, 600 hectares under 'mosur' cultivation with a production target of 460 MTs, 3,000 hectares under 'chola' cultivation with a production target of 2790 MTs, 400 hectares under 'mug' cultivation with a production target of 170 MTs, 1,500 hectares under 'mashkalai' with a production target of 1100 MTs, 240 hectares under 'motor' cultivation with a production target of 180 MTs, 1,540 hectares under 'khesari' cultivation with a production target of 1,140 MTs, 1,000 hectares under onion cultivation with a production target of 4,600 MTs, 800 hectares under garlic cultivation with a production target of 4,600 MTs, 500 hectares under 'dhanai'

with a production target of 1,000 MTs, 1,500 hectares under chilli cultivation with a production target of 3,000 MTs, 249 hectares under zinger cultivation with a production target of 1,245 MTs, 850 hectares under terraric cultivation with a production target of 2,125 MTs and 25 hectares under 'arohor' cultivation with a production target of 175 MTs, AED official sources said.

AED also has taken up a massive programme of winter vegetables cultivation. Some 6,700 hectares of land have been brought under vegetables cultivation with a production target of 1,00,500 MTs of vegetables, AED sources added.

But according to growers sources, the seeds of winter crops are being sold at a high price. Some kinds of seeds including onion, 'mula' are being sold in the local markets two to three times the government rate.

Some farmers also feared that winter crops cultivation may be hampered following the high price of seeds.

Garlic cultivation programme on 2,000 hectares in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Jan 1: The district Agriculture Extension Department (AED) has taken up a scheme to bring 2,000 hectares of land under garlic cultivation in eight thanas of the district

50 hurt in clash at jatra pandal

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 1: About 50 persons were injured at village Fatahjal in Kanaighat thana recently over holding of obscene dance at a function there in the name of 'Jatra'.

Of them one with critical wounds had been admitted into the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, while five others into Kanaighat Thana Health Complex, sources said.

Local sources informed, the clash ensued when several hundred villagers moved to the venue near Dukari beel where a 'Jatra' was going on at night. Both the groups used lethal weapons.

during the current season.

According to official sources, the production target of garlic for the cultivation has been fixed at 11,500 tonnes.

Thana-wise break up of the total land brought under the programme is as follows: 490 hectares of land with 2,817 tonnes as production target in Sadar, 400 hectares of land with 2,300 tonnes as production target in Char Bhiadrans, 20 hectares with 115 tonnes as production target in Nagarkanda, 700 hectares with 4,025 tonnes as production target in Sadarpur, 65 hectares with 375 tonnes as production target in Bhanga, 140 hectares with 805 tonnes as production target in Madhukhali, 150 hectares with 862 tonnes as production target in Boalmari and 35 hectares of land with 201 tonnes as production target in Alladanga thana.

Necessary measures have already been taken to provide farmers with bank loan, fertiliser, pesticide and other agri-

cultural inputs to achieve the target.

Besides, 225 field supervisors are on supervision of the programme in all the eight thanas to make it a success.

Man killed in road accident

GAZIPUR, Jan 1: A man was killed and 14 people were injured when a bus fell into a roadside ditch in Kodda area on Dhaka-Tangail highway on Monday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the accident occurred at about 5 pm when driver of the Tangail-bound bus lost control over the steering, leaving 15 people injured.

Of the injured, an unidentified man aged about 30 succumbed to his injuries on way to hospital. Five of the injured were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.



JHENIDAH: Mohammad Aminur Rasul, Deputy Commissioner of Jhenidah delivering speech as the chief guest at a function held here recently on the occasion of the triennial conference of Class Four employees at Jhenidah poura auditorium.

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 unabated shrimp farming in the paddy fields have been posing a serious threat to environment of the region.

Owners of the shrimp farms 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.

Diarrhoea takes alarming turn in Naogaon dist

NAOAGAN, 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 Forsha and Patnitala.

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.

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, Minara Begum, wife of the deceased Nurul Haque, 45, filed a case with Biswanath thana.

In the case, she alleged that, Harunur Rashid and Soddok 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 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 Soddok, wife of the victim said in the case.

Acute scarcity of LP gas in Naogaon

NAOAGAN, 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.

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, reports UNB.

Police and family sources said a young housewife Sudia Khatun, 25, wife of Nazam Uddin of Bodipathar 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 Chhaganaiya thana Parul Akhter, 17, daughter of Eshak Mia, was allegedly killed by her elder sister Monwara Begum following a quarrel over a trifling matter.

Family sources said the victim was residing at her elder sister's home in the same village. On the fateful day on Dec 23 Monwara picked up a quarrel with Parul over a trifling matter and at one stage she allegedly kicked her at the belly killing her on the spot.

All the members of the house including Monwara fled their home after the incident.

Another report from Sylhet adds: A housewife allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself at Hazrapara village in Bianibazar thana on the night of December 25.

The victim Ayrunnesa, 40, wife of Wahidur Rahman allegedly hanged herself from the ceiling of their house. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

The autopsy of her body was performed at the Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital.



NARAYANGANJ: A day long workshop on 'Reforms of Election Laws' was jointly organised recently by Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) and Study and Research of Human Assistance Association in cooperation with Bangladesh Mohila Ainjibi Samity (BMAS) at the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry auditorium. Local MP AKM Shamim Osman spoke as the chief guest. Former chairman of Narayanganj Pourasava Nazimuddin Mahmood and Coordinator of BMAS, Narayanganj Advocate Merina Begum also seen in the picture. —Star photo.



FARIDPUR: An evaluation test in progress following conclusion of the six-month literacy course in Nagarkanda thana. —Star photo.

11 alleged train dacoits arrested

From Our Correspondent

MOULVIBAZAR, Jan 1: Eleven alleged dacoits were arrested for their involvement in the Joyantika inter-city train dacoity incident.

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 dacoity was committed in Sylhet bound Joyantika inter-city train on November 21 last year. When the inter-city train reached at a point between Satgaon 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

Abdur Razzak 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.

3 persons including boy killed in road accident

NOAKHALI, Jan 1: Three people, including a minor boy, died in the district in separate incidents on Friday, reports UNB.

The deceased were identified as Khairul Monjur, 12, son of Anisur Islam, Mafuzul Huq, 28, son of Sheikh Farid and Belal Hossain, 20, son of Abul Kalam.

Khairul and Mafuzul of village Lamchi Prashad in Sadar thana while working in a field met their tragic end when they came in contact with a snapped electric wire.

In another incident, Belal was beaten to death on Chaprashir hat road in Sadar thana by the rivals following a previous enmity.

250 poor settler families in distress

SYLHET, Jan 1: A total of 250 poor settler families at four villages in Kanaighat thana here have been passing their days in great distress for long, reports UNB.

According to official sources, these families affected by severe riot in Assam 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.