News snaps

Tk 1.78cr municipal taxes unpaid

PATUAKHALI, Jan 23: Municipal taxes amounting to Tk 1.78 crore is outstanding in the three wards of Patuakhali municipality, reports APB.

Out of the total Tk 93.52 lakh is outstanding with different government offices and Tk 4.30 lakh with private holdings. Pourasava sources said the municipality is in a difficult situation and can not do any development work as huge taxes are outstanding. Municipal taxes amounting to Tk 14.50 lakh is outstanding with Patuakhali Polytechnique Institute alone. Another 13.15 lakh is outstanding with Patuakhali Government Varsity College. The local PTI, Savings Department, Primary Education Department, GA Estate, Government Girls School, Ansar Headquarters, BRDB, Income Tax Department, Police Superintendent's Office, TB Clinic, WDB office and Government Women's College have been identified as the 'chronic' defaulters.

No patient treated in health complex

FENI, Jan 23: Believe it or not, there is a government hospital with all its manpower and other facilities, but no patient was treated there in the last seven months, reports APB.

Doctors, nurses and other staff, numbering 37 in total, have been taking their salaries and all the medical equipment are there at Munshirhat Thana Health Complex, but no medicare services are available because it has not yet been formally opened. Construction of the 31-bed thana health complex was completed in May, 1998 at a cost of Tk 4.45 crore, provided by the OPEC Fund Furniture and equipment were supplied in time. In another such misfortune for the people of the area, the newly constructed second and third floors of Feni Sadar Hospital are lying useless with all its facilities. The number of beds at the hospital was raised to 100 from 50 seven months ago by constructing the two floors but treatment facilities could not be increased as the additional manpower has not yet been appointed.

Dacoity in two houses

SHERPUR, Jan 23: Robbers looted goods worth about Tk 2.5 lakh swooping on two houses in Sadar thana on Wednesday night, reports UNB.

Police said a gang of masked men attacked the house of Suruzzaman at Girijanarayanpur in the town and looted valuables including 22 tolas of gold and Tk 27,000 cash. Another gang of 10 armed robbers stormed into the house of Nurul Islam at Barogharia in Sadar thana on the same day and decamped with the booties including TV and gold ornaments. Separate cases were filed with Sadar police in these connections.

Bid to curb dacoity

JHENIDAH, Jan 23: Jhenidah police has installed video cameras at all check posts on inter-district highways and roads to curb the increasing incidents of dacoity, especially in night coaches, reports APB.

SP of Jhenidah Khoda Baksh Chowdhury told that in the new system passengers, drivers, helpers, inter-district buses and their number plates are being video-taped at the check posts. This will help police curb dacoities in inter-district routes in the area and also nab the dacoits, he said.

Flood-hit farmers being harassed

MAGURA, Jan 23: Flood-hit farmers here alleged that the banks have been harassing them for loan despite a government suspension for one year on its realisation from them, reports UNB.

Growers of Mohammadpur, Sreepur and sadar thanas suffered huge losses due to the prolonged and devastating flood last year. They said most of them virtually turned into pauper as the flood heavily damaged their crops as well as dwelling houses and other belongings. Presently, many farmers have no ability to repay the loans taken earlier from different banks, they said. Considering the circumstances, the government suspended realisation of loan from them. But, local officials of different commercial banks, agriculture bank and BRDB are trying to realise loan from the helpless tillers by filing cases. When contacted, local bank officials admitted that they have been continuing the process of realising the loan as there is no official circular regarding the suspension.

790 commit suicide

JHENIDAH, Jan 23: A total of 790 people committed suicide in six thanas here last year, police said, reports APB.

The causes of the incidents of suicide were poverty, family feud, love affair and frustration. Of the deaths, 250 were in the sadar thana, 205 in Shailkupa, 119 in Kaliganj, 86 in Moheshpur, 81 in Harinakunda and 49 in Kotchandpur thana, police said. In the previous year, 808 people committed suicide in the district.

Frustration grips students

NETROKONA, Jan 23: The students who passed HSC in Vocational and Business Management disciplines have been facing problems in admission to Honors courses of different universities and colleges, reports UNB.

The students alleged that although Vocational and Business Management courses are equivalent to other HSC courses, the college and university authorities are not allowing them to apply for different Honours courses offered by them. The government through a notification on Jan 1, 1995, made HSC (Vocational) and HSC (Business Management) degrees conferred by the Technical Education Board equivalent to other higher secondary level degrees. But, the students said many of them could not apply to colleges and universities, as the admission advertisement did not mention their degrees as a pre-qualification. Most of the advertisements mentioned HSC/Alim/Diploma-in-Commerce/BFA as requirement for admission. Frustration gripped the students who are being deprived of higher education.

450 unnatural deaths in a year

JESSORE, Jan 23: At least 450 unnatural deaths, including 115 murders took place in Jessore district last year, reports APB.

There were 175 incidents of suicide and 96 accident deaths during the period. Most of the murders were due to internecine feuds between extremist elements, police said. Eleven murders took place on a single day in daylight at village Narendrapur in Kotwali thana last month. Besides, killing of Saiful Alam Mukul, Editor of local Daily Runner and Jubo Dal leader Khairul Bilu created sensation in the district. The number of murders in the previous year was 106.

Roads in bad shape

MAGURA, Jan 23: The plying of vehicles on Magura-Sripur road has become hazardous due to its deplorable condition, reports UNB.

The 20-km road, the only link between the district and Sripur thana headquarters, has been lying without repair for long creating big holes at many places obstructing movement of vehicles. Hundreds of vehicles including baby-taxi, bus, truck and minibus ply everyday on the road transporting goods as well as passengers. Local people said that many road accidents occurred due to the potholes killing and injuring people. They urged the Roads and Highways Department to take measures for repair of the road.

One killed in road accident

JHENIDAH, Jan 23: A man was killed in a road accident at Batpukuria in Sadar thana on Jhenidah-Chuadanga road on Sunday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said Ashraful Islam, 55, died on the spot when a speeding truck hit the bicycle he was riding and ran over him. Later, police recovered the body and sent to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy. The driver along with the vehicle fled from the scene. A case was filed with Sadar police.

House bldg loan sanctioned

NATRAKONA, Jan 23: The government has sanctioned Taka 23 lakh as house building loan for repair and renovation of flood-ravaged kutcha-houses in 10 thanas and two pourashavas of Netrakona district, reports BSS.

Netrakona district administration sources said, a total of 4,600 flood-hit families in 10 thanas and two pourashavas will get the loan. Each of the family will get Taka 500. Thana level committees headed by the concerned Thana Nirbahi Officers have already been formed for ensuring proper distribution of the house building loan.

70,000 maunds of 'Aman' produced

BHERAMARA, Jan 23: Seventy thousand maunds of 'Aman' paddy worth over Taka two crore were produced in the Ganges-Kobadakh project area this year despite the devastation flood last year, reports BSS.

This success in production has been achieved due to embankments constructed around the project area covering Kushtia, Magura and Jhenidah districts. The embankments, though partly damaged during the flood, were repaired immediately by the project personnel and thus saved the standing crops on over one lakh forty thousand acres. Meanwhile, the government sanctioned money for post-flood rehabilitation work of Raita-Mohishakundi Dam at Daulatpur and Mobarak Dam at Mirpur. The repair work has not yet been started as the sanctioned money is yet to reach the project authority.

BARISAL: Shopkeepers cater to customers in last-minute shopping on the last day of Ramadan Monday. There was a frenzy of shopping following the late announcement of sighting of Shawal moon. — Star photo

93 killed in Kushtia last year

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Jan 23: Lawlessness has been prevailing in the district as the last year saw 93 murders, 60 clashes, and various other crimes.

Although police are carrying out combing operations every day and night, no sign of relief is in sight.

Incidents of dacoity, clashes between political parties and rival groups, murders, muggings, abduction, highway robbery, terrorism, looting, arson, rape, and other anti-social crimes are rampant in the district. Terrorists are holding about 15 lakh people to ransom.

During the last year, 93 people were killed, 52 dacoities were committed, and 15 rape cases were recorded. More than 100 people were abducted for ransom during the period and about 15 of them are still missing.

Also, some 1000 people were injured in different clashes, and 15 motor cycles were hijacked.

Twenty murders - the highest number in a month - occurred in September while 10 others were killed the previous month and 13 in May. Seven people were murdered in January, 10 in February, 4 in March, 5 in April, 3 in June, 2 in July, 6 in October, 6 in November, and 7 people were killed in December.

The most sensational murders occurred at Kalabaria village on August 2 in Mirpur thana when opponent groups killed five members of Biplobi Communist Party. They are Bakkar, 29, Shorab, 32, Tariqul, 31, Sarwar, 29, and Golap, 25. All of them were slaughtered to death. On September 27, a gunfight between two groups of extremists in village Naturia Kumarkhali thana left four people dead.

JSD leader Ranjit Kumar Roy Singha was killed in his house at Bheramara on October 20. Advocate Nur Mohammad was hacked to death by the armed terrorists at Kamalapur Bazar under sadar thana on November 22 when he was playing cards. Abdus Samad, a commissioner of Kushtia pourashava, was shot dead at his residence in the town by unknown assailant on October 8.

Out of 100 people abducted, about 50 people were released on payment of ransom. And police rescued about 20 people from their clutch. Fifteen victims were killed because of non-payment of ransom money. Their bodies were found in various places of the district.

Daulatpur thana police recovered two bodies from the septic tank of Daulatkhali High School under Daulatpur thana on October 24.

The bodies were identified as Akkas Ali, 24, son of Sher Ali and Jowadul 20, son of Jasimuddin Molla. Akkas was abducted on October 11 while Jowadul on October 14 by the armed terrorists. Both of them were killed as their parents could not pay the ransom demanded by the gunmen, family sources said.

Medical camp at Feni

FENI, Jan 23: The local branch of Bangladesh Diabetic Samity will organise a two-day special medical camp January 29-30 at the district Diabetic Hospital, reports UNB.

Internationally reputed physicians will provide treatment to the poor patients, informed general secretary of the Samity Abdus Sattar.

Sattar in a press release urged the people willing to take advantage of the facility to register their names in the Diabetic Hospital from January 23 to 28.

KHAGRACHHARI: Forests being denuded very fast here as the brickfield owners are cutting trees unabated to use those as fuels in furnaces. — Star photo

200-year-old Imam Bari on verge of destruction

From Atiur Rahman

JESSORE, Jan 23: The 200-year-old historic 'Imam Bari' a magnificent building, constructed at Nurali near the town, by the legend of charity, Haji Mohammad Mohsin, is on the verge of ruination.

Continued negligence and lack of maintenance by the authority, has created such a situation.

In a bid to protect the building and uphold its past glory, the Archaeological Department took it upits renovation work in March 1987. But nothing has been done yet for reasons unknown. The building was once the main office to run the entire zamindary administration of Haji Mohammad Mohsin.

Haji Mohammad Mohsin transferred all his properties in favour of Syedpur Trust Estate through a deed of will for the welfare of general public in 1806.

Regular maintenance of the building and release of pay and allowances to its caretakers from the revenues of the estate were clearly mentioned in this historic document.

Haji Mohammad Mohsin died in 1812. Soon after his demise, irregularities began to creep in the administative set-up.

Things became all right and all irregularities were removed when the Indian government came forward and interferred in the whole affairs.

But when the properties were acquired by the law of acquisition during the period of earstwhile East Pakistan, the estate became like guardianless.

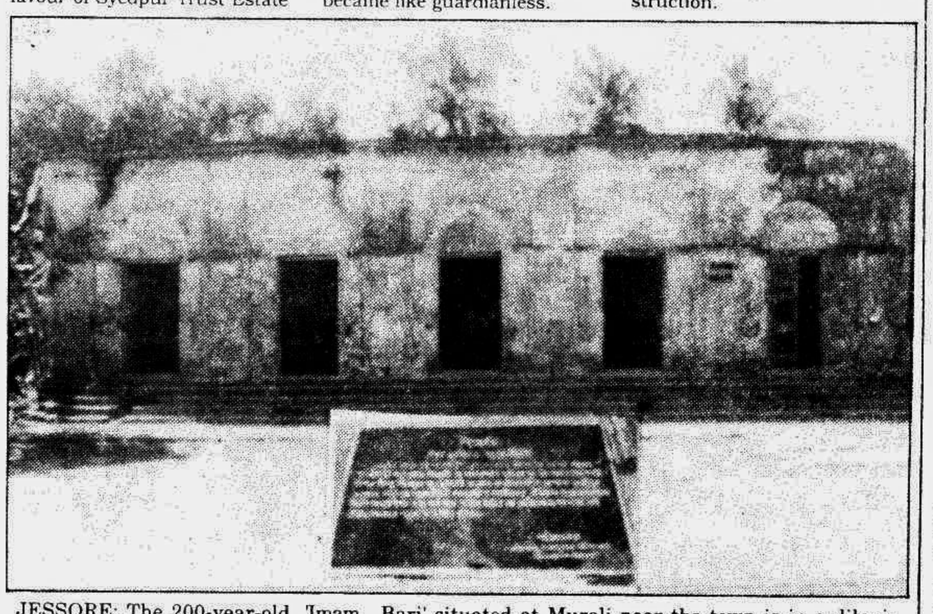
Later, the local district administration sanctioned Taka nine lakh to utilise them for public service.

According to the will, a caretaker was appointed, but no positive steps have so far been taken for its repair and reconstruction. Imam Bari is in a very pitiable condition. All the doors and windows have been destroyed, its walls roofs have been broken down and the floor has become the dens of poisonous snakes and insecticides.

It is heading towards complete destruction.

If this situation continues, it will go out of existence.

The Archaeological Department should take up its renovation work immediately with a view to saving it from total destruction.



JESSORE: The 200-year-old 'Imam Bari' situated at Murali near the town is in a dilapidated condition. It needs immediate repairing. — Star photo

Reconstruction of 200 km roads complete

JESSORE, Jan 23: The Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) has completed reconstruction of over 200 km rural roads under 72 development projects in the district at a cost of Tk 20.52 crore, reports APB.

As many as 22 projects for reconstruction of 97.04 km roads were completed at a cost of Tk 15.53 crore under the RD-18 Project.

Some of the important roads include the Vatpara-Amtoli road, Phultala-Bejerdanga road, Sarsa-Gorepara road, Bankra-Jhikargachha road, Eajganj-Goaldah bazar road, Jessore-Patengali-Kayemkhola road, Chowgachha-Kotchandpur road, Kaťakhali-Gourighona-Chuknagar road, Morirampur-Nehalpara road, Phulerhat-Gaoldah Bazar road, Keshabpur-Sharshkhati-Traganj road, Shantala-Khitibdia road and Shainkhati-Taraganj road.

Another 24 projects covering 106 km roads under the Rural Infrastructure Maintenance. Programme were completed at a cost of Tk 1.71 crore.

Some 15 more schemes involving construction of culverts have also been completed under the IFAD project by using 59 tonnes of wheat. These culverts were constructed at Growth Centres connecting roads in Bagharpara, Monirampur, Chowgachha, Jhikargachha and Keshabpur thanas.

Besides, 13 covered drains with a total length of 18 km have been constructed in Jessore municipal area at a total cost of Tk 2.78 crore under the Secondary Town Development Programme, funded by he Asian Development Bank (ADB).

One killed, 3 hurt as police fire on mob in Bagerhat

BAGERHAT, Jan 23: One person was killed and three others received bullet wounds as police opened fire on a mob at Madhurkathi in Moralganj thana here on Thursday night, reports UNB.

Witnesses said, a police team of Moralganj thana went to Madhurkathi village at about 9.00 pm to nab some dacoits.

Police arrested three people on charge of dacoity. Of the arrested, about Malek was the brother of local Awami League president Abdul Latif.

On way to the thana, local people attacked the policemen apprehending that a group of dacoits had swooped on their village.

Police, however, declared their identity by shouting and opening 14 rounds of blank shot but the angry villagers did not stop. Failing to resist them, police fired at the mob.

Mafiz Sheikh alias Chan Mia with bullet wounds in his chest was rushed to Pirojpur Sadar Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Of the injured, Kawser Ali Sheikh, 25, and Moksed, 14 were admitted to the Pirojpur Hospital while Hashem Sheikh, 20 to Barisal Sadar Hospital.

A tense situation was prevailing in the area following the incident.

A case was filed with Moralganj thana in this connection.

Father, son get life term for killing man

JHENIDAH, Jan 23: A court here sentenced a father and his son to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) for killing a man, reports UNB.

Additional District and Sessions Judge M Abdur Razzak, in his judgement on Thursday, also fined Daud Hossain and his son Fazlur Rahman Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer another two years of RI.

According to the prosecution, the convicted killed Sazzad Hossain of village Zinnah Nagar in Moheshpur thana on April 14, 1997 in a bid to grab his lands.

The judgement was delivered after examining the records and witnesses.

In another judgement on the same day, the court awarded two youths life term for violating a teenage girl.

The accused were also fined Tk 5,000 each, in default, to suffer one more year behind the bar.

The prosecution in brief is that the accused-Mofizur and Idris-aged about 20, violated a 15-year old girl at Kanchannagar in the town on April 15, 1998.

Upon complaints, police submitted chargesheet against six people.

The court found Mofizur and Idris guilty and handed down the judgement. Another four were acquitted.

Bus dacoity at Chandpur

CHANDPUR, Jan 23: Dacoits looted valuables worth about Tk 12 lakh from the passengers of a Chandpur-bound bus from Chittagong at Uarook in Shahrashti here on midnight Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said the dacoits boarded the bus "Sagorika," at Comilla Bishwa Road in the guise of passengers and suddenly attacked the homebound passengers at Uarook around 12:30 am.

During the scuffle with the passengers, a dacoit named Mizan, 35, fell from the bus at Meher and was caught by local people who handed him over to the police.

Shahrashti police chasing the bus caught two other dacoits and the bus driver.

A case was filed with Shahrashti police.

7,191 certificate cases in Mymensingh yet to be settled

From Aminul Islam

MYMENSINGH, Jan 23: A total of Taka 14.89 crore invested by Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) and Sonali Bank has been lying outstanding with the defaulters.

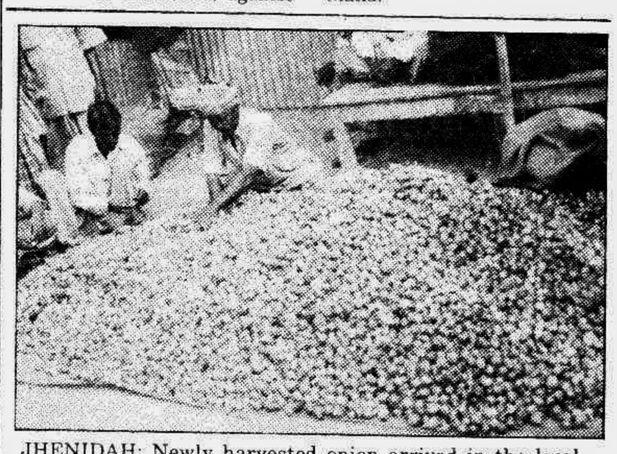
This is because 7,191 certificate cases filed by the two banks are yet to be settled.

A total amount of Taka 12.63 crore invested by Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has been lying outstanding with the defaulters of 12 thanas due to lack of settlement of 6,698 certificate cases filed by the bank.

Of the total amount, the bank filed cases against 583 defaulters of sadar thana to realise Taka 1,05,42,000, against 216 defaulters of Muktagacha to realise Taka 37,72,000, against 196 defaulters of Trishal to realise Taka 31,13000, against 169 defaulters of Phulbaria to realise Taka 26,69,000, against 374 defaulters of Gafargaon to realise Taka 45,47,000, against 1,410 defaulters of Bhaluka to realise Taka 2,10,92,000, agianst 654 defeaulters to realise Taka 1,10,76,000, against 237 defaulters of Iswarganj to realise Taka 47,38,000, against 298 defaulters of Nandail to realise Taka 50,19,000, against 1,795 defaulters of Phulpur to realise Taka 2,26,92,000, against 437 defaulters of Haluaghat to realise Taka 91,92,000 and against 338 defaulters of Dhubaura thana to realise Taka 89,18,000.

Sonali Bank of the district filed 493 cases against the defaulters to realise an amount of Taka 2,25,93,000 invested by the bank.

Sonali Bank filed 58 cases to realise Taka 27,14,000 from the defaulters of sadar thana, 47 cases to realise Taka 25,85,000 from the defaulters of Muktagacha, 19 cases to realise Taka 10,29,000 from the defaulters of Phulbaria, 10 cases to realise Taka 24,00,000 from the defaulters of Gafargoan, 42 cases to realise from the defaulters of Trishal, 32 cases to realise Taka 5,78,000 from the defaulters of Bhaluka, 25 cases to realise Taka 7,31,000 from the defaulters of Gouripur, 88 cases to realise Taka 1,63,000 from the defaulters of Ishwarganj, 75 cases to realise Taka 57,29,000 from the defaulters of Nandail and 97 cases were filed by the bank to realise Taka 37,81,000 from the defaulters of Phulpur thana.



JHENIDAH: Newly harvested onion arrived in the local markets. — Star photo

Extortionists active

Natore businessmen passing days in fear, anxiety

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Jan 23: Businessmen in the town have been passing their days in fear and anxiety following indiscriminate extortions by different groups.

Local businessmen alleged, toll collection and incidents of extortion were almost nil in the markets of the town even a few weeks ago. But recently, with the Eid shopping spree several groups of extortionits have become very active in the local markets.

Sources said, various groups backed by local musclemen, politicians, transport worker leaders and their agents and members of law enforcing agencies are seen to collect tolls forcibly from different shops at Uttara super market, Kamela super market, central mosque market, Neechabazar, Kapuriapotty, Lalbazar, Station bazar, Old bus stand area, central bus stand and Madrassa square.

The situation has become worse at the Central Mosque market, a busy shopping centre in the town. On January 7, a drunkard youth Mithu alone ransacked a shoe shop at the market. He also damaged a glass-made showcase of the shop and assulted another shoe shop owner. The shopowners alleged that Mithu ransacked the shop when they refused to give some pair of shoes free of cost to him. Later, Mithu was whisked away by some 'influential' youths whose age hardly exceeds 18 years.

However, the local journalists insisted Natore police to arrest Mithu and his group leader Tuhin from the market area at the same night. They went there again with evil designs, police said. Meanwhile, the shopowners of the market feared to let the police know about the matter.

The owners of the shops alleged, about 40 per cent of their total profit usually go away to pay the local musclemen backed by various political parties.

Besides, groups of transport workers along with their agents collect toll amounting to Taka 30 extra for each truck and coaches of long routes. The law enforcers and their agents have been also reported to collect regular tolls from the hoarders of the smuggled goods in the town.

A section of rail empoyees, rail police and their agents are often found to collect toll openly from the smugglers in the station areas and in various trains carrying the goods.

However, the toll collection and incidents of extortion have increased manifold in the markets of the town and residential areas from the begining of Ramadan.

Shortage of teachers at Barisal SBMC

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 23: Acute shortage of teachers has been prevailing for a long time at Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College (SBMC).

Except a few ones almost all the professors, associate professors and assistant professors are working here on temporary category. They were not regularised for a long time due to unknown reasons. Now, two professors, six associate professors and 24 assistant professors, are working in the college with 'current charges'. Besides, many posts of professors are lying vacant for years together.

Most of the posts of 'lecturers' are also lying vacant in different departments in the college which are yet to be filled up. But the Health Directorate is paying no heed to the matter even after repeated requests from the college authority to fill up the posts. Moreover, they have transferred some senior lecturers who have passed the 'lecturership examination' earlier. Those who have passed this 'lecturership examination' will be retained as teachers in the medical colleges if there is no specific allegations against them from the concerned authorities.

Students of Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College alleged several times that they had been suffering much in studies due to acute shortage of professors and lecturers in the college. Moreover, it is learnt that the Health Ministry has already created and sanctioned some new posts including those of lecturers in government medical colleges and in other health sectors.

As a result, the crisis of teachers in medical colleges will be increased.

Now, according to college sources it has been revealed that at SBMC against 20 sanctioned posts of professors, 26 associate professors, 30 assistant professors and 32 lecturers there are only three professors, 13 associate professors, 28 assistant professors and 16 lecturers who are working in the college. Of them most of the professor ranking teachers are working with 'current charge'.

According to informed sources, excepting the capital city this picture has been prevailing in all other government medical colleges in the country. According to an authoritative source, the General Medical Council (GMC) of UK is likely ot review its recognition given earlier by March-April next year.

In that case, Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College too may face difficulty due to shortage of teaching staffers.

One arrested, goods seized

MADARIPUR, Jan 23: Police arrested a man and seized huge quantity of smuggled goods from a shop at Mostafapur Bazar in sadar thana on Saturday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the Bazar and arrested Abdul Alim, a UP member of Ghatamajhi union council.

They seized 2,400 bottles of smuggled phensidyl and 70 sacks of jute seed.