

News snaps

Dacoits kill one in Mathbaria

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Jan 27: One person was killed on the spot and at least five others were injured when a gang of armed dacoits stormed into a house at Chotshoula village in Mathbaria thana of Pirojpur district on Friday night.
Witnesses said, the armed dacoits broke open the house of Manik Mia of the village and attacked the inmates of the house. At one stage the dacoits opened fire. As a result Anwar Hossain, 25, was killed on the spot. The dacoits were resisted by the villagers on way back. Then they opened fire. Five more people were injured during the encounter. The dacoits looted away wealth of more than Tk 30 thousand.

Bride stabbed

MYMENSINGH, Jan 27: A bride was seriously injured, allegedly stabbed by her former beau on Thursday morning at her residence at Kalapaga village in Haluaghat thana of the district, reports UNB.
She was admitted to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in critical condition. Shahnaz Parveen, a first year student of Nalibari Mohila College, had an affair with Sadek Ali of village Jagli of the same thana, sources said. They said Sadek got furious hearing that Shahnaz was scheduled to marry another person on Thursday. He came to the residence of Shahnaz and stabbed her seriously. However, her relatives and the villagers caught hold of Sadek and handed him over to the local thana police. Meanwhile, in police custody, Sadek said Shahnaz was stabbed by her brother Anwar, who missed stabbing him (Sadek) during a brawl.

Beel water poisoned

JHENIDAH, Jan 27: Some men have thrown poison into the waters of the Karolua Beel, with the sinister aim of grabbing control of the waterbody, reports APB.
Locals said, fish worth over two lakhs taka have perished as a result. Police sources said a group of young men of Maheshpur Educated Youths Association were cultivating fish in the beel with financial assistance of the Department of Youth Development. Becoming envious of their success some men allegedly poured poison into the waters of the beel to seize its control.

Swaraswati Puja celebrated

NARSINGDI, Jan 27: Members of the Hindu community, specially the students celebrated "Swaraswati Puja", one of the greatest religious festivals with traditional enthusiasm and due religious fervour on Friday, reports BSS.
Students of different educational institutions including Narsingdi Government College, Narsingdi Government Women's College, Narsingdi Government High School and Kali Kumar Institute separately erected puja pandals in their respective institutions. A large number of devotees offered prayer seeking blessings of Swaraswati, the goddess of learning. Sheba-Sangha Parishad celebrated the puja through elaborate programmes at Sheba-Sangha hall premises.

Sweetmeat sellers avoiding VAT

JHENIDAH, Jan 27: A large number of sweetmeat sellers of the district town have reportedly been evading VAT for quite a long time now, reports APB.
Locals alleged that most of the shop-owners do not care to give cash memos to the customers when they sell sweetmeat. There are over 200 sweetmeat shops in the district, which sell on an average, 125 to 130 maunds of sweetmeat every day. Local sources said the shop-owners had been avoiding payment of VAT in collaboration with dishonest tax officials.

Massive wheat farming programme

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 27: A massive programme has been taken up to bring 13,017 hectares of land under wheat cultivation in 13 thanas during the current season, fixing the output target at 29,093 metric tons, reports UNB.
Officials said about 1,732 hectares would be brought under wheat cultivation in Hossainpur, 2,851 in Sadar, 2,447 in Pakundia, 1,380 in Katiadi, 1,450 in Karimganj, 373 in Tarail, 104 in Tina and 62 in Mitamoni, 263 in Nikli, 169 in Austagram, 1,325 in Bajitpur, 578 in Kuliarchar and 265 in Bhatrai thanas. Necessary measures have been taken to provide farm loans, seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and other agrinputs among the farmers at fair prices.

Two killed in road accident

BANDARBAN, Jan 27: Two people were killed on the spot and five others injured in an accident on Gazalia-Aziznagar road in the district on Sunday night, reports UNB.
Police said a truck loaded with illegally collected timber fell into the ditch beside the road at Satmie as its driver lost control. The victims were identified as Mohammad Jalal Hossain, 18, and Mozaher Mia, 22. Police seized the vehicle, but the driver and his helper managed to flee.

Phensidyl seized

JOYPURHAT, Jan 27: Police in a raid on Monday night seized 93 bottles of illegal Phensidyl syrup from a house in Sonapati area of the town, reports UNB.
They also arrested Hazera Kathun, 38, wife of Shamsuddin of Andharmua village in Chirir Bandar thana of Dinajpur district, during the raid. A case was filed with the police in this connection.

98 FWP schemes will be implemented

CHUADANGA, Jan 27: A total of 98 schemes will be implemented in all the four thanas of Chuadanga district in the current financial year under the Food for Works Programme (FWP), reports BSS.
The government has sanctioned 889 tonnes of wheat for the implementation of the schemes. Four thanas of the district are Chuadanga sadar, Alamdanga, Damurhuda and Jibannagar. According to an official source, of the total schemes 25 schemes will be implemented in Chuadanga sadar thana allotting 211 tonnes of wheat, 3 schemes in Alamdanga thana allotting 290 tonnes of wheat, 26 schemes in Damurhuda thana allotting 241 tonnes of wheat and 11 schemes in Jibannagar thana allotting 147 tonnes of wheat.

51 uplift projects to be implemented

PIROJPUR, Jan 27: Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) will implement 51 development projects in the district under its rural infrastructure maintenance programme during the current fiscal, reports UNB.
Of the projects six will be implemented in Nazirpur, 13 in Mathbaria, seven in Kalkhali and six in Bhandara thanas. Under the programme, 19 more projects will be taken up soon in Nasarabad and Sadar thanas, officials said. Meanwhile, the department has allocated Tk 93.71 lakh for implementing the projects. The project works include construction and reconstruction of roads, bridges and culverts.

Man with pipe gun arrested

RAJSHAHI, Jan 27: Police arrested a young man along with a pipe gun from Hetemkha Sheikhpura area in the city on Tuesday, reports UNB.
The arrested, identified as Noman, 30, attempted to kill his parents in the morning of the Eid day, police said. A case was filed with the police in this connection.

Fodder crisis in Tangail

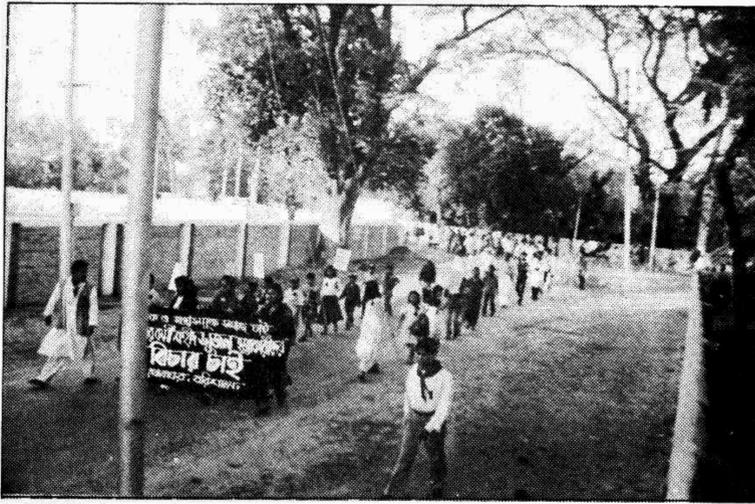
TANGAIL, Jan 27: Acute fodder crisis is prevailing in the district. Hay is being sold at high prices. Due to recent long standing flood which damaged paddy plants such scarcity of fodder has been created, reports BSS.
Fodder crisis may be minimised by harvesting of 'Boro' paddy in the months of April and May. Livestock Department sources said that HYV fast-growing grass cultivation may also minimise the shortage of fodder.

Phensidyl recovered

FENI, Jan 27: Jawans of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) have recovered 475 bottles of phensidyl from the border areas of Chagalnaiya thana recently, reports APB.
Acting on a tip-off, the Jawans conducted raids at Madhugri in the thana and recovered the smuggled phensidyl bottles which were found abandoned. The recovered bottles were handed over to the Feni Customs.

Early marriage rampant

SHARIATPUR, Jan 27: Early marriage and marriage without registration are rampant in the rural areas of six thanas in the district, reports UNB.
Local sources said a section of fake marriage registrars and molles are abetting in such marriages defying the relevant rules. They said that the trend was particularly prevalent in the shoal areas. Most of the guardians normally marry off their sons before they pass SSC examination and engage themselves in the family affairs. Early marriage is a common feature in the shoal areas of Bhedarganj thana. Naodoba and Kazirchar in Jajira, Gariber Char, Kechuar, Char and Dhali Hat in Goshairhat thana. The government is being deprived of revenue earning, as most of the marriages are not registered. It also creates many social and health-related problems for the couples and the families.



BARISAL: A mourning procession was brought out by the people of all walks of life here recently following the death of Sujan Mollah, a first year student of Barisal Polytechnic Institute. He was killed in a factional clash of BNP activists when he was engaged in an anti-drug campaign near the BNP office at Sadar road on January 14. He succumbed to his injuries at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital after fighting for life for six days. —Star photo

Acute scarcity of medicine, saline

Diarrhoea claims 80 lives in Faridpur dist

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Jan 27: Diarrhoea has broken out here from the beginning of the new year. It has now taken a serious turn now.
At first the disease was confined within the bounds of three thanas — Bhangra, Nagarkanda and Sadarpur but now it has spread over Madhukhali, Sadar and Boalmari thanas.
According to unofficial reports pouring here from remote villages of the affected six thanas, 80 persons died of diarrhoea and nearly 7000 persons have been attacked with the disease. The number of diarrhoea patients are alarmingly increasing unabated.

When contacted over telephone, the administrative officer of the Civil Surgeon office told this correspondent that 15 persons died of diarrhoea and 732 others were attacked till January 13 on the basis of the official reports received here from different health complexes and hospitals. He also said that 120 medical teams have been working round the clock to combat the disease but they failed to check the rapid spread of the disease. He also admitted that acute scarcity of medicines, particularly IV and oral saline has been persisting in the affected areas.
Taking this opportunity

some dishonest traders are making windfall profits by selling these at exorbitant prices.
When visited Faridpur General Hospital and Faridpur Medical College Hospital it was found that the isolation wards of the hospitals were overflooded with diarrhoea patients not to speak of other thana level health complexes.
It is also learnt that most of the patients admitted are elderly men, women and children. The administrative officer also admitted that in spite of their best efforts, the spread of the disease could not be contained.

Thief shot dead by bank guard

From Our Correspondent

BOGRA, Jan 27: Firoj, 25, a thief was shot dead by the guard of Janata Bank, Bogra Sopotadi Branch when he entered into the bank with an accomplice at about 12.15 pm on January 19.

A case was filed with Debhata thana police.

'Bedy' families in distress

NATORE, Jan 27: Gone are the days when the 'Bedy' families never worried for their livelihoods, but their earnings started to fall with the gradual change in society threatening their existence, reports UNB.
A good number of 'Bedy' families have been residing on the west bank of the river 'Gur' near Chalan Beel in Shingra thana, depending on their ancestral profession.
According to an unofficial estimate, the 'Bedy' population at Parsingra village near the Chalan Beel now stands at 2,500.

They are now passing the days in acute poverty for lack of government initiative to rehabilitate them.
Illiteracy and social discrimination has also aggravated their sufferings.
"We are now neglected and isolated. Whatever the lands once we had have been grabbed by a section of influential people making us pauper," said a member of the community wishing anonymity.

Eid reunion

By Staff Correspondent

Raipur Truck Drivers' Cooperative Society in Daudkandi thana of Comilla district organised an Eid re-union function on Thursday.

Veteran freedom fighter Major Gen (Retd) Mohammad Subed Ali Bhuiyan attended the programme as the chief guest.
Presided over by ex-UP Chairman Abdul Latif Bhuiyan, it was addressed, among others, by Jahangir Alam, a teacher of Raipur High School, freedom fighter Shawkat Ali and president and general secretary of the society.

Speaking on the occasion, MSA Bhuiyan said the conscious section of the society will have to launch a social movement to eliminate terrorism from the society. In this context, he said each and every citizen has the social responsibility to maintain peace, discipline and law and order.
Bhuiyan said the conscious people will have to play an effective role side by side with the law-enforcing agencies against terrorism.

Expressing deep concern over deterioration of law and order situation at Daudkandi thana and several brutal murders in recent days, the retired general said all peace loving citizens of the society will have to unite against terrorism for the greater interest of the future generation as well as to ensure peace and development.

Bhuiyan exchanged Eid greetings with the office-bearers of the society and local people and assured to provide necessary furniture for the office of the cooperative society.

Flood-hit Gaibandha farmers deprived of Eid festivity

From K M Rezaul Hoque

GAIBANDHA, Jan 27: People of remote village areas of the district could not celebrate the Eid festival due to acute hardship following major crop damage due to the devastating flood last year.

Over two third portions of the district remained under water for a long time. As such 'Aman' crops on vast tract of lands were damaged completely. Peasants who are completely dependent on agriculture could not afford the minimum expenditure of Eid festival. Now they have to spend cautiously for cultivation of IRRI and Boro crops. These are the staple crops in the season. So any one who possesses a single plot of land spends his last penny for IRRI-Boro farming.
Abdul Karim, a marginal farmer of Gideri areas in the

sadar thana told this correspondent that he had sold his only goat and procured inputs for IRRI farming on 0.22 deci-

Financial support for 20 farmers

JESSORE, Jan 27: Twenty affected betel farmers have been provided financial support in Jessore district under post-flood agriculture rehabilitation project, reports BSS.

Taka twenty thousand at the first level of the supportive programme has been given by the district commissioner on an occasion at the Jessore office of Agriculture Extension Department.

Each farmer has been provided with Taka one thousand to re-cultivate the betel fields.

mal land. He could not procure anything for his children on the occasion of Eid.

Another farm labourer named Hashem Ali of Char Kapasia in Sunderganj thana compelled to go to a distant place in search of work prior before Eid. He returned to his home after the Eid festival. So he could not celebrate the Eid festival with his family due to hardship.

Abul Hashem, a small grocery shop owner of Fakir bazar in the sadar thana told that he invested Taka two thousand in his shop for Eid purpose, but he could not sell half of the commodity. But he sold diesel oil to farmers beyond expectation.

People of remote rural areas preferred to purchasing agricultural inputs instead of Eid shopping this time.

Erosion threatens Daulatpur thana

From Our Correspondent

KUSHIA, Jan 27: Erosion of the river Padma had left over one lakh people homeless in Daulatpur thana. They are passing their days in agony for the last 20 years.

The river already devoured 30 educational institutions, 50 mosques, three cattle markets, 25 hats and bazaars, five BOP camps during the period. The river devoured eight-kilometre Raita Mohiskundi Flood Protection Embankment which was constructed in 1972. The river also eroded 10 thousand acres of land during the period in eight unions. The eroded unions are Philipnagar, Ramkrishnapur, Maricha, Chilmari, Adabaria, pragpur, Boalia and Aria.

The erosion-hit people informed that the main river Padma was flowing eight miles away from the present course in 1972. As a precautionary measure, a 12-mile-long Raita Mohiskundi Flood Protection Embankment was constructed in 1972 by the Water Development Board (WDB). But the embankment has already been devoured by the river which was caused by the direct effect of Farakka Barrage constructed by India.

The uprooted people have no land to live in or to cultivate. They have got no money or source of income to maintain their families. The thana administrations have been facing great problems to rehabilitate the unfortunate people. The relief materials so far distributed among them are too inadequate

to meet the demand. They have no job at the moment. As a result a considerable number of erosion victims sailed for unknown destinations. Some of them have already engaged themselves in works like rickshaw driving, plying of push carts and other odd jobs. Meanwhile, aged and disabled people have resorted to begging for mere survival. Most of them have been suffering from malnutrition and they easily fall prey to various diseases.

The victims urged the authorities concerned to take proper steps to stop erosion of the river and save Daulatpur thana. They have also urged to rebuild Raita-Mohiskundi Flood Protection Embankment to save the victims.



BRAHMANBARIA: A group of children coming out from a centre of UNESCO Club Literacy Programme recently at Rauhat in Kasba thana. —Star photo

One killed in Patuakhali road mishap

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 27: One person was killed and at least 36 others were injured in a road mishap at Amragachia on Patuakhali-Antali road recently.
Witnesses said, a passenger bus of Rony Paribahan which was on way to Antali from Patuakhali met the accident when its driver lost control and hit a roadside tree.

The accident left Manirul Islam, 26, killed on the spot and at least 36 passengers injured. Seriously injured driver Anwar Ali, 28, and Asha Rani, 60, were sent to Barisal SBMC Hospital and Shajahan, 24, Nazmul Islam, 35, Khudija Begum, 30, Islam Gazi, 21, Ahsan, 30, Salam, 21, Jahangir, 30, Saru Akan, 50, Saheed, 30, and Majnu, 25, were admitted to Patuakhali Sadar Hospital.

Use of sanitary latrines decreasing

PANCHAGARH, Jan 27: Use of sanitary latrines is gradually decreasing in 16 northern districts, a UNICEF survey has said, reports APB.

Only 27 per cent of the families are now using hygienic and sanitary latrines and if the declining trend continues the target for sanitizing latrines by 2000 will not be achieved, it said.

The Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) has set up 261 centres for sale of ring slabs for water-sealed latrines. NGOs are running another 71 centres in the districts. But few families can afford to buy ring slabs because of higher price, the survey conducted in the rural areas recently said. Ring slabs for a sanitary latrine

cost about Tk 2,000. According to the survey, there are about 2,62,44,010 people in 16 northern districts, and the number of families is 50 lakhs. About 73 per cent of these families do not have sanitary latrines.

The district-wise percentage of non-sanitary latrine users is: Panchagarh 65 per cent, Thakurgaon 75 per cent, Dinajpur 70 per cent, Nilphamari 87 per cent, Lalmonirhat 62 per cent, Rangpur 91 per cent, Kurigram 69 per cent, Gaibandha 70 per cent, Joypurhat 72 per cent, Bogra 59 per cent, Sirajganj 69 per cent, Pabna 82 per cent, Naogaon 80 per cent, Chapainawabganj 88 per cent, Natore 93 per cent and Rajshahi 63 per cent.



MAGURA: Fellow mate of Mijanur Rahman, a handicapped college student of Sripur Degree College pushing his wheel chair toward class room. —Star photo

A teen striving hard to win over his disability

From Monojit Kumar Das

MAGURA, Jan 27: There is a large number of people here who became physically handicapped in their childhood before the introduction of polio vaccination programme.

Most of them have turned into burden of the family as well as society. A few of them have become successful personalities by their determination and hard struggles. Md Mijanur Rahman is such a handicapped teenager who is determined to succeed in life.
Mijan, 18, son of Md Golam Tahur Mollah of village Daribila in Sripur thana is striving hard to succeed in life because of his firm determination. He has been studying in the second year class of HSC at Sripur Degree College in spite of his disabilities.

According to his family sources, Mijan was attacked by polio at the age one. As a result, his two legs became paralysed. Due to financial crisis, his parents could not treat him properly. In spite of his physical disabilities he continued studies and passed the SSC examination in the First division from Khamarpara High school of Sripur thana in 1997.

While talking to Md Mijanur Rahman he told the correspondent that he got admitted in HSC class at Sripur Degree Col-

lege for receiving higher education.
The teachers of the college arranged a wheel chair with their financial help of them and the students of the college. Now he is studying in the second year class of HSC class in the Humanities group. He is determined to achieve a good result in the HSC Examination. After obtaining the HSC certificate he wishes to get himself admitted in Dhaka University, he informed.

Mijan informed, his class mates and teachers are always helpful to him. Now he is staying at the college hostel free of cost. Billur Rahman, a student of second year HSC class in the Science group and Uttam Kumar Biswas of the same class are his room mates. They are always extending a helpful hand to him. His fellow friends escort him to the class rooms by pulling a wheel chair. They also take back him to his hostel room from the class rooms.

He father is a small marginal farmer. He has one brother and one sister. His younger brother reads in class seven and his sister is a child now.

He is now determined to succeed in life by dint of hard work and grim struggle.



SATKHIRA: Fish worth Taka three lakh died when miscreants recently poured poison in a shrimp enclosure at Komorpur in Debhata thana. —Star photo



JHENIDAH: NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation recently arranged a workshop on Community Managed Watsan Programme at the training centre of 'Banchte Shekho,' a local non governmental organisation. —Star photo