

News snaps

Body recovered

JESSORE, Feb 15: A beheaded body of a young man, abducted allegedly by outlaws from his Naldanga village home earlier, has been recovered from a *beel* in Bagharpura thana, reports APB.

The body was identified as that of Abdus Salam, 35, son of Lokman Mollah, police said on Monday. Salam, who was reportedly a former member of banned Biplobi Communist Party, had returned home from Malaysia three months back after staying there for three years.

Tk one cr power bill remains unpaid

SHERPUR, Feb 15: The amount of unpaid electricity bill in Nalitabari thana here is over Tk one crore, official sources said, reports UNB.

The subscribers with whom the about has been lying unpaid include residential houses, commercial establishments, rice mills, saw mills, rural power pumps and shallow engines. Power Development Board authorities conducted special drive in November and December last year and snapped over 100 illegal power connections. They also recovered Tk 50 lakh as arrears of electricity bill during the drive. PDB sources, however, said there were still several hundred unauthorised power connections in the thana. Local sources complained that linemen and metre readers of PDB receive regular shares from the unauthorised power consumers. They further complained that a big amount of electricity bill remained unpaid for long with some officials and employees of different government offices. These government servants did not pay their bills when they left their quarters.

1,278 tubewells remain inoperative

BANDARBAN, Feb 15: As 1,278 tubewells remained inoperative for a long time, acute scarcity of pure drinking water has hit the hill district forcing the people to take pond water, reports UNB.

Official sources said the tubewells in seven thanas had been installed at a cost of Tk 12 crore and now it will take Tk 1.73 crore to repair those. When contacted, DPH Executive Engineer said they could not repair the tubewells simply for lack of fund. Sufferings of about 2 lakh people of the hill district have intensified as rivers of the region dried up with the recession of flood water last year, they said.

Gold medal awarded

FARIDPUR, Feb 15: Meritorious students of Mahmudunnabi Secondary School at Madh ikhali and winners of its annual sports meet were awarded D. Gafur Gold medal in a simple ceremony at the school recently, reports APB.

Mohammad Shahidul Hassan, LGED Superintendent Engineer and Shahiduzzaman Khan, Executive Editor of the daily Financial Express attended the function as the chief guest and special guest respectively.

Gambling under cover of jatra

KURIGRAM, Feb 15: Owners of gambling rings are doing a roaring business in 60 spots in nine thanas here, reports APB.

Gambling has been going on under cover of *jatra*, circus and VCRs in collusion with the police, local people alleged. These anti-social activities are going on in places including Egari, Matha in Newashia union of Nageswari thana; Berubari, Dainar Par and Onpangli bridge area in Tabakpur union of Ulipur thana, Bamerhat, Dharanibari, Mahsaler Dighi and Bokultala in Ulipur thana and Kathalbari in Gunalgachhi union of Bakshiganj thana, Rajarhat, Bhurangamari and Fulbari are also spots noted for gambling.

Rover moot at Kaliganj

SATKHIRA, Feb 15: A grand jalsa of Satkhira District First Rover Moot was held at Kaliganj College premises recently, reports BSS.

Divisional Commissioner of Khulna Mohammad Abdul Kashem was present in the function as the chief guest. Regional Secretary of Bangladesh Scouts Sayedur Rahman was the special guest. The function was presided over by the Deputy Commissioner of Satkhira, Saiful Alam. The rovers of the moot presented many cultural items in the function.

Girl rescued

TANGAIL, Feb 15: Ghatal thana police rescued a girl, Banya Roy, 12, from South Para recently, reports BSS.

She was allegedly kidnapped by miscreants last month from her father's house. A case was filed with Ghatal thana in this connection.

Road construction work progressing

NARSINGDI, Feb 15: The work of 13 rural infrastructure development and flood rehabilitation projects at a cost of Taka 13 crore 40 lakh in the six thanas here are progressing satisfactorily, reports BSS.

According to Local Government Engineering Department, 40 per cent work has already been completed and the rest is expected to be completed by April next. The work include renovation and reconstruction of roads, culverts and bridges. After completion of the projects road communication of the district would be improved.

Timbers seized

SATKHIRA, Feb 15: The forest officers of Koikhali Forest Office under Shyamnagar thana in several raids in the Sundarbans areas seized five thousand pieces of stolen 'sunduri' and 'poshur' timber loaded in three engine boats, worth over about Taka 15 lakh recently, reports BSS.

According to official sources, the forest officers of Koikhali Forest Office raided many places in the Sundarbans areas and seized five thousand pieces of stolen 'sunduri' and 'poshur' timber. The timbers were loaded in three engine boats. Timber loaded six other engine boats managed to escape. The seized articles were handed over to Shyamnagar thana police.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Vice-Chancellor Prof Abdul Khaleque with a cultural team of the university who departed for Gulbarg University at Karnataka in India to take part in the SAARC Youth Festival '99 there.

— Star photo

Number of leprosy patients up

HABIGANJ, Feb 15: The number of phthisis and leprosy patients in the district is increasing in an alarming rate, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said some 2,706 people were infected by phthisis while 1,791 by leprosy in eight thanas during the last year. Of the patients, 673 were attacked by tuberculosis in sadar thana while 210 in Nabiganj, 151 in Azmirkhanj, 308 in Baniachang, 131 in Lakhai, 501 in Chunarughat, 372 in Bahubal and 340 in Madhabpur thanas. During the period, 122 people were affected by leprosy in sadar thana while 151 in Nabiganj, 12 in Azmirkhanj, 60 in Baniachang, 34 in Lakhai, 882 in Chunarughat, 199 in Bahubal and 321 in Madhabpur thanas.

Latrines allotted free of cost

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 15: Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) has allotted a total of 3,472 latrines free of cost in 107 unions of 13 thanas, here in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to PHED official sources, the thanawise break up of latrines are: 273 in Mithamon thana, 234 in Tarai thana, 217 in Itna thana, 234 in Hossainpur thana, 172 in Nikli thana, 381 in Katli thana, 429 in Kishoreganj sadar thana, 186 in Kuliarchar thana, 334 in Kamrangir thana, 180 in Astagram thana, 284 in Pakundia thana, 266 in Bajupur thana and 282 in Bhairab thana. The disbursement work is going on with the help of UNICEF.

State Minister visits River Instt

FARIDPUR, Feb 15: Minister of State for Water Resources Dr Mohammad Alaudin recently visited the River Training Institute at Faridpur, reports APB.

He saw various models for study including that of Bhairab Railway Bridge. He praised the work by experts and said the institute was of international standard.

National

Door to door electioneering in 3 pourasavas of Jessore dist

JESSORE, Feb 15: Brisk preparations are afoot for holding elections in three pourasavas of the district, reports APB.

The pourasavas in the fray are Jessore, Abhoynagar and Monirampur. The status of the last two local bodies were raised recently.

Eight candidates are contesting for the post of Chairman and 132 candidates for those of commissioners in the three pourasavas.

The chairman candidates are Sharif Abdur Rakib, SM Qamruzzaman and Iqbal Karim Zahid for Jessore pourasava; Walir Rahman, Enamul Haq Babul and SM Ashrafuzzaman Shah for Abhoynagar pourasava and M Nazrul Islam and Amzad Hossain Lablu for Monirampur pourasava.

In Jessore pourasava, 45 candidates are contesting for the posts of nine commissioners, while 11 women vying for three reserved seats.

As many as 30 candidates are contesting for nine ward commissioners in Abhoynagar pourasava and eight contenders for three reserved seats for women.

In Monirampur pourasava, there are as many as 28 candidates for the men's nine seats and 10 contestants for the women's three reserved seats. A total of 41,190 male and

38,277 female voters will exercise their franchise in Jessore pourasava, 18,712 male and 16,843 female voters in Abhoynagar pourasava and 6,192 male and 5,525 female voters in Monirampur pourasava.

The Election Commission has set up 260 booths in 49 centres of Jessore pourasava, 111 booths in 18 centres of Abhoynagar pourasava and 35 booths in 10 centres of Monirampur pourasava areas.

Candidates, their supporters and workers are now busy holding projection meetings and door to door electioneering.

BSS from Kishoreganj reports: Election tempo has gained momentum in three pourasava areas of Kishoreganj district.

Candidates have started contacting people door to door. The campaigning is going on in full swing.

According to official sources, 10 chairmen, 181 commissioners and 37 women commissioners are contesting in the election.

Meeting, processions and poster are going on as usual. People of all walks of life seems to be very much interested about the election. They want the poll heart and soul.

Meanwhile, a meeting was held in the conference room of the district on February 8 with DC in the chair.

The meeting discussed about free fair and peaceful holding of election.

All necessary steps are being taken for maintaining law and order during election.

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Five killed in road accidents in 2 dists

Five persons were killed and 13 others injured in two road accidents in Gaibandha and Sylhet on Friday and Sunday, reports UNB.

Two people including a boy were killed and three others injured in a road accident at Masti in Gobindaganj thana of Gaibandha district on Sunday.

Police said the accident occurred when a microbus carrying newspapers from Dhaka collided head-on with a truck on the spot.

The victims are: helper of the microbus and an unidentified boy, aged about 10.

The injured, drive of the microbus Arivar, 30, Abdul Gafur 28, and Majibur, 30, were admitted to the local hospital.

Police seized the microbus, but the truck driver managed to flee the scene along with his vehicle.

Another report says: Three people were killed and 10 others wounded when two vehicles collided head-on at Kamalganj of Jakiganj thana in Sylhet on Friday.

According to witnesses, the mishap occurred when a Sylhet-bound bus from Jakiganj rammed a tempo coming from the opposite direction in the afternoon leaving 13, three of them seriously, injured.

Of the injured, Jamal, 25, succumbed to his injuries on way to Osman Medical College Hospital while Khilfur Rahman, 50, and Baharuddin, 15, to Jakiganj thana Hospital. All the three were tempo passengers.

Ten other wounded people were admitted to Jakiganj Thana Health Complex.

500 arrested in Sylhet in 15 days

SYLHET, Feb 15: As part of its countrywide combing operation, police detained more than 500 people from the district alone in last 15 days, reports APB.

They also recovered three homemade pipe guns, two pistols, two crude bombs, two rounds of cartridges and some other lethal weapons from 11 thanas in the district during the drive.

Police sources said, of the arrested 375 were held under GR cases, 75 under regular cases, 45 under Article 54 CrPC, and 10 fugitive offenders.

Police started the countrywide drive to round up anti-social elements as part of the government effort to improve law and order.



MAGURA: Early cultivated onions have arrived in the local markets abundantly. As a result prices of onion have also decreased to a great extent. At present one maund of onion is being sold at Taka 400 which was sold earlier at Taka 1,000 a month ago. This picture was taken last week from a rural market. — Star photo

Quality of pry edn worsens

NOAKHALI, Feb 15: Quality of primary education in the country deteriorated although the number of the school going children increased significantly, reports UNB.

Shortage of teachers, furniture and accommodation for the students are mainly responsible for deterioration of the standard of the elementary education.

According to their recommendations the survey was conducted in 104 primary schools under the programme and in 97 schools out of the programme.

The survey found that the presence of total children in the schools reached at 77.6 per cent after the programme was started which was 63 per cent before starting of the programme.

Over 1.14 lakh metric tons of wheat were distributed among poor students that was increased in the calendar years 1995, 96, 97 and '98 considering the survey reports of the respective years.

However, a steering committee comprising representatives from Primary and Mass Education

Department, Internal Food Policy Research Institute, Food Ministry, Bangladesh Statistical Bureau and World Bank was formed to evaluate the quality of primary education.

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The survey found that the presence of total children in the schools reached at 77.6 per cent after the programme was started which was 63 per cent before starting of the programme.

Rate of dropout per year before starting the programme was 18.5 per cent that came down to 10.9 per cent after the programme was initiated.

Moreover, lack of adequate teachers, furniture and audio-visual systems and lack of proper supervision by the authorities concerned contributed mostly to the deterioration of the standard of education.

A survey titled 'Food for Education Programme: Improvement or Deterioration of the Quality of Child Education' revealed that the number of school going children increased with the introduction of the Food for Education Programme.

It also found that number of dropouts decrease side by side with increase in the numbers of the school going children in the age limit of 6-10 years.

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