

News snaps

Abduction bid foiled

CHUADANGA, Mar 8: Local people foiled an attempt of armed miscreants when they tried to abduct four local journalists on Wednesday night, reports UNB.

Witnesses said, a gang of criminals swooped on the newsmen of Darshana press club of Damurhuda thana and tried to kidnap them at gun point while they were gossiping at a shop at 9 pm. Later, the terrorists were forced to retreat in the face of stiff resistance by the locals. The newsmen Sharifuddin, local correspondent of Akker Kagoj, Azad Hossain of Loksamaj, Abul Kashem Babu of Daily Janmabumi and Moniruzzaman Dhru of Banglabazar were hurt in the attack. A protest meeting was held on Thursday at the Darshana press club condemning the attack on the newsmen. The meeting urged the administration to nab the culprits within the next seven days. It also decided to submit a memorandum to the DC and hold a protest meeting on March 11. Meanwhile, local journalists including president and general secretary of the district press club in a joint statement condemned the incident and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits responsible for the attack.

Work on cross dam yet to be started

SUNAMGANJ, Mar 8: The work of Jinarpur cross dam to save the adjacent villages and cultivable lands from the onslaught of hilly waters is yet to be started for fund constraint, reports UNB.

District Water Development Board sources said an allotment of Tk 41 lakh was given for the dam, but it has later been re-allocated for another project. Sources said at the preliminary stage Tk 60 lakh and 100 metric tons of wheat were sought for the dam in fiscal 1998-99, but no approval so far came from the concerned authorities. Meanwhile, Jinarpur Distressed People Welfare and Flood Protection Committee submitted a scheme to the concerned authority for proper construction of the dam. They mentioned that if any one of the four enclosures are not constructed at the bank of the river Chalt, 30 villages and 25,000 acres of land, schools, madrasas and Takerhat power line will be inundated by the hilly waters from Indian state of Meghalaya.

Property worth Tk 20 lakh burnt

COX'S BAZAR, Mar 8: Separate fires broke out here on Friday afternoon, destroyed property worth about Tk 20 lakh and injured seven people, reports APB.

A fire which originated from an electric short circuit at a shop in Chiringa of Chakoria Paura area soon spread and engulfed 12 adjacent shops. Seven persons sustained serious burn injuries and most of the goods in the shops were gutted in the fire that was later brought under control by the locals. In another incident, 10 houses at village Merungloa in Ramu thana here were ravaged by fire in the same afternoon. The villagers, after untiring effort for several hours, finally succeeded in putting out the fire. No one has reportedly been injured.

50 quarters of Rly colony occupied

NARSINGDI, Mar 8: As many as 50 quarters at Bhatrap railway colony have been illegally occupied by some local mastaans and influential people for about 10 years, reports APB.

The occupiers are using some of these quarters as their residences and have rented the rest, but local railway officials are keeping them, residents at the colony alleged. Some corrupt and dishonest railway employees are involved in it. The railway authorities are being deprived of at least five lakh taka revenue annually due to this, they claimed. There are more than 500 quarters in the colony. Local Railway authorities conducted 'inquiries' into the matter several times as an eye-wash and did nothing to evict the unauthorised occupiers.

Problems grip C'nawabganj PTI

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Mar 8: The district Primary Teachers' Training Institute (PTI) has been facing manifold problems for a long time, reports UNB.

The institute is not only lacking the required number of teachers but also the trainees. Of the 14 posts including the Super, four have been lying vacant for long. The posts of instructor of agriculture and fine arts, Assistant Super, Assistant Librarian and sweeper have also been lying vacant causing disruption to the training activities. The other problems of the institute include shortage of furniture, auditorium and residential facilities of the trainers. The long-lasting devastating flood last year caused extensive damage to the institute. A demand was made to the higher authorities to allocate Tk 2.25 lakh for its necessary repair work. But no step has yet been taken in this regard.

Jamalpur Bar Assoc poll held

JAMALPUR, Mar 8: Ruling party Awami League-backed panel bagged all the 20 seats in the district bar association election held on Sunday, reports UNB.

Abdul Mannan Pathan was elected as president and S M Joinal Abedin and Mohammad Solaiman Bhuiyan as vice presidents. Wazuddin and Abdul Awal were elected as general secretary and assistant general secretary respectively while Dewan Abul Kashem was elected treasurer, Asaduzzaman library secretary, Khaleda Sarkar Auditor and Okhil Chandra cultural secretary. Other elected members are: Ataur Rahman Khan, Saadullah, Nuruzzaman Moilal, Nazrul Islam, Mokbul Hossain, Mahub Alam, Mazharul Islam, Shafiqul Islam, Shahidullah, Sarwar Hossain and Sushoma Rani Moudol. BNP and Jatiya Party-backed panel also contested in the election.

Workshop on child edn

GAZIPUR, Mar 8: A workshop on Child Education and Literacy Survey at the district level was held at the Local PTI on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Kausar Sabina, Jahanara Begum and Muhammad Mesbahuddin addressed the inaugural function while district Education Officer Mehruunessa presided. Thana Education Officer, Assistant Thana Education Officer and teachers of primary schools attended the function. The workshop called upon the school teachers to play their due role for conducting the family-based survey at the field level here beginning from April 11-13.

Goods recovered

SYLHET, Mar 8: Bangladesh Rifles on Monday recovered Sundari timber and betel leaf worth about Tk 2.66 lakh from Jokiganj here, reports UNB.

BDR sources said, they raided a Sylhet-bound tempo coming from Jokiganj and seized the goods at noon. Later the goods were deposited with the local Customs. The jaouns, however, could not detain anyone in connection with the stealing.

Body recovered

GAZIPUR, Mar 8: Police recovered the body of an unidentified teenaged boy from Zazar village in sadar thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police and hospital sources said the body was recovered from a road of the village. It was suspected that the victim was killed by the miscreants. The body was sent to the sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

Book fair concludes

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 8: Three-day long book-fair concluded recently at the premises of Rajkatchari in Bhatrap bazar here, reports BSS.

The fair was organised by the thana administration with the cooperation of Anwara General Hospital. People of all walks of life visited the book fair.

25 defaulter Jalmahal lessees

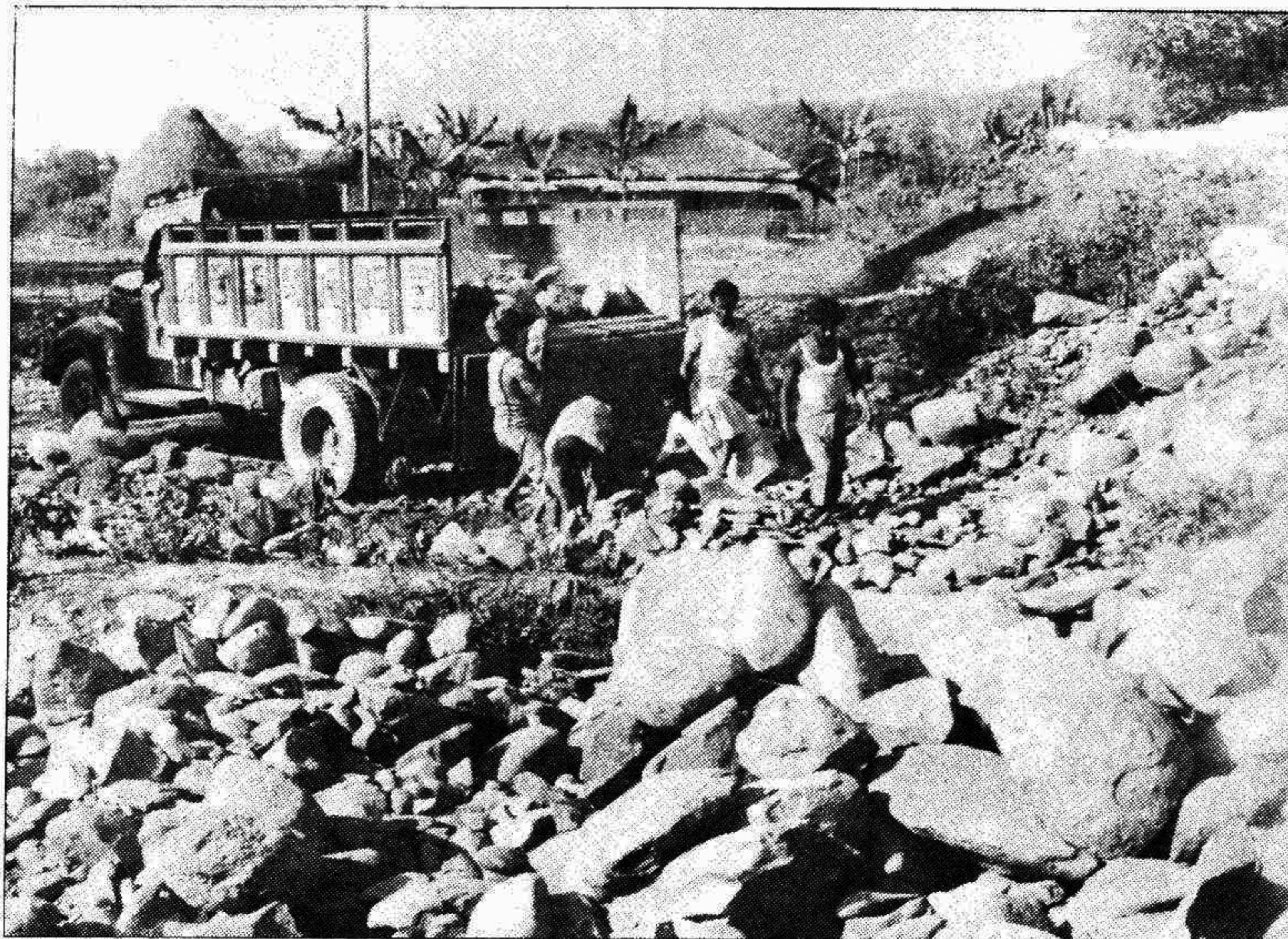
SUNAMGANJ, Mar 8: Twenty-five jalmahal lessees here have been declared defaulters as they failed to pay revenues amounting to over Tk 11.50 lakh, reports UNB.

Officials said the district administration has filed a certificate case against one of the defaulters, Nuruzzaman Khan, leaseholder of Nadikulma-1 jalmahal in Dharmapasha thana. Of the defaulting leaseholders, 10 are in sadar, five each in Shalla and Jagannathpur, three in Dharmapasha and two in Doarabazar thanas. After taking lease of the jalmahals for a three-year period, the lessees had only paid the first installment of their revenues. They later on in collaboration with a section of employees the district administration have expressed their inability to pay the remaining installments. Meanwhile, some jalmahal leaseholders have lost interest to pay their due taxes as their jalmahals have silted up due to flooding and for lack of maintenance.

Welding workshops threaten health

SHERPUR, Mar 8: Public health in Sherpur is being endangered by the welding workshops which are operating in the district, reports APB.

There are more than one hundred welding units in Sherpur municipality and as many in Nalitabari, Nakia, Jhinaigati and Sribardi thanas. Most of these are along roads and welding work is done in open spaces. The blazing blue light emitted by electrodes is not only endangering public health but also harming the environment. According to law, welding units can not be set up in public places. Doctors say, the light of the electrodes is harmful for eye.



COX'S BAZAR: Stones being collected from a quarry at Raju Amtali in Ukha thana here. The quarry near the border with Myanmar is being tapped in an unplanned way. — Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Natore's terror Bharat arrested

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, Mar 8: Finally Natore's 'top terror' Bharat was arrested recently from the town, police sources said.

Bharat Kumar Chakrabarty, 26, an Awami League backed Jubo League cadre, was accused in seven cases including two woman repression cases. He was also wanted by the police in five other cases.

Natore police, in cooperation with his accomplices who turned-rivals, arrested him from Uttar Chowkripur area in the town along with a hand-made bomb and a 48 inches "Ramdao".

Several sources told this correspondent that before cooperating with the police, the rival group led by Anirul Rahman

Masum ransacked and damaged Bharat's house at Fouzdaripara area in the town. The rival group later set ablaze the house which was burnt to ashes. There was none inside the house, witnesses said. The fire service members, however, brought the fire under control within 30 minutes.

Various sources said, the fire incident was a sequel to an intra-party rivalry between Bharat group and Masum group. However, police stated electric shot-circuit as the cause of the fire incident.

The conflict between the two rival groups first came to light following the last pourasabha polls. The rivalry reached its peak on February 15 night when Bharat missed a gunshot

aimed at a worker of Masum group.

It is to be mentioned here that Masum has contested in the pourasabha polls as a commissioner candidate for Ward number 6, while Bharat's nomination was scrutinised out.

On December 28, 97 Bharat, abducted an under aged girl Bharat on gunpoint and took her to India. Later Borna's mother, at her own initiative, rescued the then SSC examinee from India after one and a half month of abduction.

Bharat is also accused in another woman repression case for attacking Shahar Banu, a young woman of Uttar Patupara on October 3 '98. Shahar Banu's breast was cut in the attack.

Patients deprived of medicare service at Patuakhali General Hospital

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 8: Patuakhali General Hospital is beset with manifold problems for a long time.

According to local people, everyday hundreds of patients are coming to the hospital for the treatment, but they are not

getting necessary medicare service and treatment due to shortage of necessary doctors, medicines and medical equipments in the hospital.

They also alleged that the doctors who are working in the hospital, remain busy with their private practices out of the hospital.

Girl raped by 2 youths in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Mar 8: A girl was allegedly raped by two young men at village Shaharmul in Nikli thana recently.

Police sources said, the victim went to a nearby 'beel' for collecting snail. From there she was forcibly taken to a duck farm by two rapists namely Saidul and Zakir. They raped her there.

The culprits are still at large.

Out of 15 posts there are 10 doctors in the hospital. The remaining five posts are lying vacant for a long time.

Patients alleged, the overall condition and environment of the hospital is very unhygienic as the people who are responsible for these jobs are not working regularly.

There are one general hospital, one TB hospital, five Thana Health Complexes in five thana areas and 12 thana health sub-centres where there are 78 posts of doctors, but till now only 41 doctors are working. Others posts are vacant.

Hospital sources said, even after repeated reminders doctors are not being posted in the vacant posts. As a result, it is

seen that only one doctor is working for 45 thousand people.

Journalists of Pabna meet with PM

PABNA, Mar 8: A 10-member delegation of Pabna Press Club led by its president Mirza Shaamsul Islam called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the local Circuit House here on Saturday, reports UNB.

The journalists informed the Prime Minister about the dilapidated condition of the press club and urged her to help renovate the club so that they can perform their professional duties properly.

The delegation included Rabul Islam Rabi, Ranesh Mitra, Anwarul Haq, Akteruzzaman Akter, ABM Fazlur Rahman, Abdul Matin Khan and Abdul Majid.

Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Sawadul Karim was present.

Prevailing climate suitable for good output of mango in S-dists

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, Mar 8: The prevailing climatic condition is suitable for a good mango production in the southern parts of the country, according to experts of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) here.

Meherpur and Chuadanga districts are well known for good production and varieties of mango. The maximum production of mango comes from the northern belt, specially Chapainawabganj and Ra-

ishahi districts.

This year the temperature was suitable for mango production. Actually there was no remarkable foggy weather. Furthermore, disease and pest-attack were almost absent. Sprouts were visible in almost all the trees, DAE sources said.

Sources added that the production of mango would be more if rainfall is available between Falgoun and Chaitra.

Abdur Rezaque Bhuiyan,

Deputy Director of DAE, Jhenidah informed that to get maximum production the owners of mango trees were spraying pesticides and watering the trees so that no pest or disease could hamper the production.

Abdul Malek of village Saikupa told this correspondent that he had been keeping in contact with the staffers of DAE for more suggestions so that optimum production of mango can be ensured.



JHENIDAH: Mango sprouts in full bloom at Saikupa here. — Star photo

Textbooks yet to reach pry schools in 2 dists

Primary education is being affected in the districts of Laxmipur and Kushtia due to inadequate supply of textbooks for the students, reports UNB.

In Laxmipur, local guardians said most of their children are being deprived of the books because the teachers could not supply their students with it. Many students are suffering from frustration, as they cannot pursue their study in the new classes properly.

The students of class III in Ramgati thana have not yet received any textbook and 'Bangla' book of class I is not supplied as yet.

According to government order, one old book should be supplied to the students along with the new set of textbooks. But, some teachers said they could not collect usable old books from the students of class I as most of the books were in bad shape and beyond the usable condition.

Sources in the education office here said that only one fourth of the total requirement of textbooks was supplied in the district. They, however, failed to say when the rest of the books would be supplied.

Many guardians complained of gross irregularity in distribution of books, which further aggravated the situation.

A number of Headmasters in

different thanas complained that the books available from the government were supplied among the students of Sadar thana and supply in other thanas is too inadequate.

They said shortage of books in their schools would have not been severe if the distribution of available books was even and proportionate to the number of students in each thana.

In Daulatpur thana of Kushtia free textbook sets in 188 primary schools have not yet reached.

Officials said there are 105 government and 83 non-government primary schools in the thana and the number of total students is about 50,000.

Distribution of textbooks free of cost among the primary school students began across the country on January 3.

Accordingly, Daulatpur Thana Nirbahi Officer Mohammad Jahangir Mollah ceremonially started distribution of books at Manikdar Government Primary School.

But the teachers complained that not a single book reached in other schools of the thana causing frustration among the students as well as guardians.

The guardians have urged the authorities concerned to take immediate measures to supply the books to the school children.

Witnesses and police said a construction worker was killed in a road accident at Khadinagar at the outskirts of the town.

The victim Jamsed Ali was killed on the spot when a sand-laden truck skidded off the road on the way.

In another incident, Salma Begum, 22, of Lakerpur village in Goainthang thana succumbed to her burn injuries at Sylhet Medical College Hospital on the same day.

Salma received injuries on Tuesday when her clothes caught fire from a lamp.

Nesar Ali, 25, son of Syed Ali of Dasghar village in Biswanath thana, took poison at his residence in the morning on Wednesday.

He was rushed to the same hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead. The cause behind the suicide could not be known.

Separate cases were filed with the police.

Two including girl killed in road accidents

COMILLA, Mar 8: Two people, including a girl were killed in two separate road accidents on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Sadar thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said the first mishap took place at Dayapur when a Chittagong-bound garment-accessory laden truck collided head-on with another truck.

An unidentified 35-year-old truck helper was killed on the spot. Police seized both the vehicles but the drivers managed to flee the scene.

In another accident, Nasima, 8, daughter of Abul Kashem of Rampur village, was critically injured on Wednesday.

Nasima was rushed to Comilla Medical College Hospital where she succumbed on the following day.

Separate cases were filed with the police.

Another report from Sylhet adds: Three people including a woman were killed in separate incidents here on Wednesday.

Three posts of ward boys of 13 posts of health assistants are also lying vacant.

There is no doctor in the emergency department. Patients needing immediate treatment have to be looked after by the resident doctor.

There is further allegation that water for the patients, doctors and workers has to be brought from outside. Sinking of a tubewell in the hospital premises has therefore become essential.

The hospital building is in a decrepit condition due to lack of proper maintenance. The operation theatre, delivery room and wards are in a shabby condition. The plaster has peeled off and the roofs of most of the rooms leak profusely whenever rain falls.



GOPALGANJ: The southern part of the district town has remained disconnected with city centre due to absence of a pucca bridge. Hundreds of people cross a temporary built bamboo bridge every day risking their lives on Gopalganj-Pathalia road. — Star photo

Bumper harvest of wheat expected in Natore dist

NATORE, Mar 8: The farmers here expect a bumper harvest of wheat this year in spite of inclement weather and after effects of last year's unprecedented floods, reports APB.

The crop is growing well and fast though they had to plant wheat later than usual, as the soil was not ready. The farmers received due cooperation from the government, NGOs and banks, locals said.

According to normal agricultural practice wheat is planted by December 20, but the farmers could not complete planting until the first week of January this year. They were interested in wheat because they had high yields last year and earned good dividends from it.

According to the District's Agricultural Extension Department about 23,795 hectares

have been planted with wheat in six thanas here.

The farmers, impoverished by last year's devastating floods, had no ready cash in their hands to use as capital. The government, under the post-flood agricultural rehabilitation programme, allocated Tk 75 lakh for Natore district. This programme has benefited about 2,000 farmers.

Each farmer received 17 kg of free wheat seeds and an equal amount of free fertiliser. Consequently there was no shortage of seed or fertiliser here as in other areas of the country. Banks and the NGOs provided the farmers with timely loans.

This proves that if the farmers receive due cooperation from the authorities, they will ensure good harvests in spite of adverse conditions, local leaders said.

Attack condemned

BHERAMARA, Mar 8: Bangladesh Sangbadik Samity, Bheramara unit has condemned attacks on newspaper offices and journalists during the hartal, reports BSS.

A meeting of the samity was held at its Bheramara office recently with Amrull Islam, president of the organisation in the chair.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Messrs A K M Kawsar Hossain, Anwarul Haque, Faruque Ahmed Pinnu, Ismail Hossain, Aizur Rahman, Raisul Islam Asad, Abu Asad Abdullah, Jahangir Hossain Jwel and Rafiqul Islam Khan.

Malaria claimed 50 lives in Netrakona in 5 years

NETROKONA, Mar 8: At least 100 people have been attacked with malaria in Kalmakanda and Durgapur thanas in the district in the last one month, district health officials said, reports APB.

Over 50 people died of malaria in the two thanas in the last five years, they said.

Local people say, mosquito menace has of late increased in different areas here. But the authorities concerned are not taking any step to eradicate mosquitoes, they alleged. SSC examinees are the worst sufferers.

The problem is acute in the three municipal areas of Netrakona, Mohanganj and Durgapur but there has been no meaningful step by the authorities for long to destroy the mosquitoes and keep the towns clean, residents alleged.

In the rural areas, the thana sanitary departments are equally inactive in cleaning up the mosquito-breeding sources. Mosquito menace usually starts here in October and continues up to May, local people said.

Sale of sub-standard drugs rampant in Netrakona

NETRAKONA, Mar 8: The sale of sub-standard drugs is rampant in different parts here as the products of some particular pharmaceutical companies flooded the local market, reports UNB.

Local people alleged that the drug authorities are not taking any action against the traders who sell these types of drugs, in which mosses, fungus, flies or other types of contamination can be found frequently.

Intake or use of such contaminated drug could endanger the lives of the patients, they complained.

A concerned source said the mushroom growth of pharmaceutical companies in different parts of the country is responsible for the manufacturing of sub-standard drugs. These companies do not bother to obtain genuine certificates from the concerned quality control authorities and market their products with attractive and alluring labels.

A section of unscrupulous physicians are patronising these companies to marketing of such low quality products.

Some patients complained that the medical representatives or agents of these pharmaceutical companies allure the physicians to prescribe their products by offering handsome gifts.

The quacks practicing in the rural areas also prescribe these sub-standard medicines, as these are available at a cheaper rate. The poor villagers use these medicines due to its low price.

Many shops and vendors are selling the drugs even without any proper drug licence.

Local conscious people demanded that only those drug items should be sold by the pharmacies, which have proper quality control certificate and the monogram of the testing authority should be labelled properly and prominently on the container or the strip of the drug.