

News snaps



CHITTAGONG: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Saturday handing over the Chancellor's Gold Medal to Kazi Amdadul Haque at the convocation of Chittagong University. — Star photo

Pyiai river becomes people's sorrow

NETRAKONA, Mar 15: Pyiai river is a 'sorrow' for the people of three thanas in Netrakona and Sunamganj districts as crops on 6,000 acres of land are damaged almost every year in absence of a sluice gate and an embankment, reports APB.

Only one crop, locally called 'Bor', is cultivated in Khaliyuri thana in Netrakona and Shalla and Dirai thanas in Sunamganj. But in absence of a sluice gate and an embankment in Pyiai river, water from Dhonu river flow in and flood the three thanas every year, damaging the crop, local people said. Some 25,000 people in the three thanas have become landless after a long fight against this over the years.

Labour leaders kidnapped

COX'S BAZAR, Mar 15: Two labour leaders working in a flood protection embankment at Maheshkhali island were kidnapped by some local goons on Thursday for realising toll, police said here on March 12, reports APB.

The goons had demanded Tk 1.5 lakh toll from a contractor of the Water Development Board's project, but he refused to pay. Not finding the contractor, the goons kidnapped Mohammad Hossain, 30 and Jalal Ahmed, 32, on gun point from the construction site at Hetalia in front of about 150 labourers, police said.

Work on Shaheed Minar begins

JHALAKATI, Mar 15: Construction of a Shaheed Minar at Nalchiti Sadar to commemorate the martyrs of the Language Movement and the Liberation War began on March 12 with contributions from local people, reports APB.

The cost has been estimated at Tk two lakh. The local pourasabha has provided one bigha of khas land for the Shaheed Minar. Nalchiti Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) AFM Imam Hossain inaugurated the construction work, expected to be completed before March 26, the Independence Day.

Administrative activities hampered

SUNAMGANJ, Mar 15: A total of 13 posts of officials have been lying vacant in Tahripur thana hampering the administrative as well as development activities, reports UNB.

Most of the posts of the officials, including Thana Nirbahi Officer, are lying vacant in the thana for long, official sources said. The other posts lying vacant included Thana Health and Family Planning Officer, Thana Engineer, Revenue Officer, Settlement Officer, Statistics Officer, Livestock Resources Officer, Thana Subject-matter Officer, Social Service Officer, Fisheries Officer, Project Implementation Officer, Gano Sasthya Engineer and Thana Youth Development Officer. When contacted, an official said most of the officers have managed their transfer elsewhere due mainly to bad communication system in the thana.

Record of highest revenue collection

BANDARBAN, Mar 15: Tarachhamukh check post in Bandarban Pulpwood Garden Department has set a record by realising revenue of Tk 2 lakh in last three months from December 11 to March 10 this year, reports UNB.

It realised Tk 24,000 and Tk 20,000 during the same period in 1997 and 1998 respectively, pulpwood department sources said. The check post, situated on the bank of the river Sangu 5 km off the town collected the revenue from forest resources such as bamboo and thatch.

Two killed in road accidents

CHUADANGA, Mar 15: Two persons were killed and eight others injured in two separate road accidents during the last two days on Chuadanga-Jessore Road, reports BSS.

According to Damurhuda thana police, one Abdul Latif, 55, of village Bishnupur in Damurhuda thana of Chuadanga district was run over recently near village Fakirpara on Chuadanga-Darsana Road. He was run over while he was crossing the road.

One Mozibor Rahman, 35, of Chuadanga Kederganipara met a tragic death and eight others were injured when they fell from a wood-loaded truck when the truck hit a road side tree recently near village Akondobaria on Chuadanga-Jessore road.

Efforts on for massive uplift

BAKERGANJ, Mar 15: Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Alhaj Abul Hasanat Abdullah has said BNP and its opposition allies want to create obstacles in the way of development through their non-issue political programme, reports BSS.

Addressing as the chief guest a large public meeting at Bakerganj thana, he said Begum Khaleda Zia was out to create anarchy to save the killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government was carrying out massive development activities throughout the country. Local unit of Awami League organised the meeting which was also addressed by Sayed Masud Reza, MP.

Dredging work going on

RAJBARI, Mar 15: The dredging work is on at the Daulatdia Ferry Ghat in the river Padma to remove the increasing accumulation of silts, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority sources said two dredgers have been working at the basin point and channel mouth day and night to remove the silts for smooth navigation. At present Aricha-Daulatdia river route is out of danger. Meanwhile, BIWTA has started work to set up an alternative new ghat at the downstream at Paturia to shorten the distance and facilitate the easy transportation movement.

One dies as truck turns turtle

CHUADANGA, Mar 15: One person died and nine others were injured when the timber loaded truck they were travelling in overturned at Akondobaria crossing on the Chuadanga-Jibannagar road on Friday, reports APB.

Police said Majibar, 40, died on the spot. The injured have been admitted to the Sadar hospital where condition of one of them, Anwar, 35, is critical. They all hailed from Chuadanga.

Discussion on independence

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 15: A discussion meeting to observe Independence Day on March 26 was held at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner on Friday, reports BSS.

Presided over by the Deputy Commissioner, AMM Farhad, the meeting discussed about the programmes of the day. Suggestions were made to include holding of colourful rally, seminar, discussion on independence and cultural function in the day's programme.

Steps to rehabilitate landless

PATUAKHALI, Mar 15: Steps have been taken to rehabilitate 201 landless and distressed families with khas lands at Barguna Sadar thana in the current financial year, reports APB.

Of them, 36 are freedom fighter families. The Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) of Barguna told that 238 tonnes of wheat have been sanctioned to develop the lands. The beneficiaries under the programme have already been provided with documents of the khas lands, the TNO said.

Man killed by rivals

SHERPUR, Mar 15: A man was killed by his rivals over land dispute at Mojakanda village in Nakhla thana on Monday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Nasimuddin, 60. Police said a longstanding rivalry between Nasimuddin and Majibur Rahman of the same village was on over the possession of a disputed land. On the fateful day while Nasim was passing through a road his rival along with his accomplices swooped on him with sharp weapons. Seriously injured Nasim was admitted to the Nakhla hospital where he succumbed to injuries.

Drought poses a threat to standing IRRI-Boro, Rabi crops in S-W dists

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Mar 15: Drought has been prevailing in south-western zone of the country, posing threat to standing IRRI-Boro, Rabi crops, mango and jack fruits.

The region has not experienced any rainfall till now since November 23, 1998. As a result, Rabi crops such as IRRI-Boro, wheat, onion, garlic, water melon, melon and vegetables have suffered a great loss.

The production has fallen much short of expectation. On the other hand farmers cannot prepare their lands for sowing seeds of Aus, Aman and jute. This is the high time for sowing seeds especially in low-lying land of this region.

Besides, recently blossomed mango jack, litchi and black bany fruits needing a shower of rain for their nourishment cannot grow well. In some cases budding mangoes have withered and are seen dropping down. It there be no rain in a week or two, the prospect of the above mentioned crops and fruits will be utterly bleak.

Besides, chicken pox which has broken out in an epidemic form across the district will lose its intensity if it rains immediately.

On account of this long spell of drought, tanks, ponds, canals and other water bodies have dried up to the great sufferings of the rural people who hardly find any water body to bathe their cattle.

Pisciculture in the region is also being hampered greatly. The tanks or ponds in which fish are reared for making profit have so little water in them that the fishes there are not in a position to survive.

The concerned authority should help the marginal farmers living on the rivers or water bodies to irrigate their crop field, to save the standing crops.

UNB from Barisal reports: The prevailing drought and lack of adequate irrigation facilities have been hampering Boro cultivation on 2.35 lakh hectares of land in 11 southern districts.

Not a single drop of rainfall was recorded in the region in the last 109 days. Only one mm rainfall was recorded on November 24, '98.

With the advent of the dry season, water levels in the rivers, canals, haors-baors and other water bodies began to decrease hampering the irrigation facilities.

In the prevailing situation, Agricultural Extension Department failed to supply adequate irrigation equipment among the farmers in one hand and the farmers also are unable to buy the equipment for them, on the other, due to financial hardships.

This year some 235,470 hectares of land in 11 southern districts have been brought under boro cultivation fixing a production target of 588,675 mts.

Of them, 42,000 hectares in Barisal Sadar, 11,470 hectares in Pirojpur, 15,300 hectares in Patuakhali, 20,100 hectares in

Bhola, 30,300 hectares in Faridpur, 29,200 hectares in Madaripur, 40,300 hectares in Gopalganj, 21,500 hectares in Rajbari, 20,000 hectares in Shariatpur, 5,000 hectares in Jhalakati and 300 hectares in Barguna have been brought under the Boro cultivation.

With the latest AED information, the plants are now in 'feeding level' that will turn into the maturity stage in the next seven to 10 days.

During the time of maturity the plants need adequate water without which the paddy becomes grain less, AED officials said.

Local Met office sources said although there was no rainfall in the region since November 24, it did not effect the cultivation as temperature was low for 52 days. But after that the temperature in the region district went high.

The cultivators urged the AED officials to supply irrigation equipment among them to achieve the targeted production.



Mango trees in full bloom at Gurudaspur (Right) and Sadar (Left) thana of Natore district. — Star photo

Bumper output of mango likely if weather favours this year

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, Mar 15: A bumper production of mango is expected in this summer if the weather remains favourable here.

The flowering and budding of mango trees this year tell much of the potentiality, says experts and growers. Almost all the trees here are now in full bloom. Buds are found in many trees. New leaves are also growing indicating a good production in future.

Favourable weather and alternate bearing habit of mango trees are the reasons of good flowering this year, identified Horticulturist Ayub Hossain Khan, while talking to The Daily Star.

Khan defined that the less intense cold and fog of the last winter could not hamper the timely flourishing of abundant buds.

Moreover, this year, has been termed as the 'on year' by mango experts, according to the alternate yielding habit of mango trees. Bumper production occurs on every alternate year and last year was the 'off year' with a poor yield.

The prospect of mango production is better this year than that of the previous year, said Horticulturist Ayub Hossain, while 50 years old Toha, an aide of a big mango-orchard at Shingardaha in Natore sadar thana added that markets would be flooded with mangoes if the buds were not destroyed by seasonal hailstorms, fog and pest-attack.

According to field officer Tareq of local Horticulture centre, the owners of mango gardens are taking precautions for protecting the fruit, though a negligible number of mango trees have already been attacked by pests.

Experts said, fluctuation of temperature which is now occurring in this region frequently may hit the production. Besides, excessive rainfall, cloudy weather and attack by pests and insects can affect the fruit's future prospects.

The sources said that there were more than 100 varieties of mango in this region. Of them, Amrapali, Khirsapat, Langra, Fazli, Himsagar, Kalua, Bou Bhulano, Ranipasand, Kisanbhog and Laxmanbhog are popular.

Experts opine that both short and long-term measures should be taken to enhance mango production. The trees should be looked after properly and scientifically and felling of healthy mango trees should be checked.

TANGAIL:Mahbubur Rahman, Managing Director of Sonali Bank on Thursday visited a good number of pineapple gardens of Madhupur area. During his visit he talked to the local cultivators regarding the prospect of cultivation of this fruit in this season. His visit was part of the bank's programme to give financial assistance for pineapple cultivation. Senior executives of the bank and managers of local branches were also with him. — Sonali Bank photo

Engine driven boat makes river journey hazardous

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Mar 15: Violating the government ban on engines in boats the boatmen using engines in boats creating journey risky.

Journey by the such engine driven boat is very hazardous as there is no break system in the boat to control its speed. This boat has no gear box. It can not be moved back ward.

Such engine driven boat has no fitness certificate for plying. Lanterns are being used in the boat. There is no head light or searchlight. Consequently serious accident may occur at any time creating losses of lives.

The number of engine driver boats are increasing day by day. Shallow tube-well engines are being used in the wooden boat. In all seasons such a boat ferry passengers and goods in Nasirnagar, Sarail, Akhaura, Kasba, Bancharampur, Nabnagar and Brahmanbaria sadar. The daily income of the traditional boat men have been decreased due to plying of engine driven boats.

3 Myanmar nationals arrested

COX'S BAZAR, Mar 15: Three alleged members of Arakan Army, an insurgent group of Myanmar, were arrested by Teknaf police in the early hours of Friday and some leaflets were recovered from their possessions, reports APB.

They were identified as Sulauising, 40, Kuseng, 36, and Mongwaysing, 35, of Dhalu village in Akiab district, police said here.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided a market adjacent to Teknaf thana and arrested them.

Work on Joypurhat Limestone project shelved for 37 years

From Our Correspondent

BOGRA, Mar 15: The work of Lime Stone Project of Joypurhat have remained stopped for 37 years.

Its preliminary work was started in 1962. After a few years its work was stopped. But the project is not closed.

The officers and employees of the project have been receiving their salaries every month without any work.

Various seasonal crops like onion, garlic are being cultivated in the project area.

Petro-Bangla sources predicted a huge stock of limestone in 1962 and in 1967 a German company brought it to notice of the then Pakistan government.

Pakistan Economic Council decided to materialise the project. Accordingly international tenders were invited in 1976-97. Bangladesh signed a contract in the month of February '81 after discussions with the Segmentation Company of Britain. The company started boring and other works to lift 64 million tonnes of lime stones from the underground which has been spread on over 13 kilometre areas. After sometime the company stopped the boring work and other works and the machinery were shifted from there despite the government of Saudi Arabia gave an aid of 30 million dollars to implement the project.

Besides, OPEC countries and other donor countries agreed for financial assistance to the project.

But the work did not progress satisfactorily.

Once the project starts operation, production is likely to continue for 26 years.

In N-dists

Groundwater pumped out for irrigation is wasted

PABNA, Mar 15: About 80 per cent of the ground water pumped out for irrigation in the northern districts is being wasted due to technical shortcomings in the irrigation project, reports APB.

As a result, the level of the groundwater is falling, posing an environmental problem, officials and experts said.

According to official sources there are more than 1,50,000 shallow tube wells and about 50,000 deep tube wells in the northern districts. But only 20 per cent of the water raised by those are actually utilised for crops due to old and damaged canals and drains.

The irrigation network was developed in the latter half of the seventies. Though the number of irrigation pumps increased manifold in the last two decades, the total irrigation system remains as it was before.

At present a 2-cuses (56 litres per second) deep tubewell is irrigating about 40 acres of Boro land. If 80 per cent of the water was not wasted, it could have covered at least 150 acres, they said.

In 1985, the government issued an ordinance to regulate the use of ground water and fixed the minimum distances between shallow tubewells and deep tube wells. But it was later annulled. The government reviewed the ordinance in 1992 and ordered removal of all "unnecessary" tube wells from the command area of the irrigation projects. But it was again annulled a year later.

Experts say, the country will face an environmental disaster if use of ground water is not regulated.

Bangladesh Power Development Board

Directorate of Purchase

WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka

Invitation of Local Tender

1. Local sealed tenders are invited by Bangladesh Power Development Board from renowned manufacturers/ suppliers for the procurement of conductors for Greater Chittagong Power Distribution Project as detailed below:

Sl No	Tender Enquiry No & date	Description of equipment/materials	Cost of tender document	Tender receiving and opening date
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Pur-222/98 dt 6-10-98	XLPE Insulated ACSRS DOG Conductor	2,000/-	24-03-99
2	Pur-224/98 dt 6-10-98	A) 11 KV DOFC & 11 KV Lightning Arrestor B) 33 KV Line post Insulator, Suspension Insulator & 33 KV Tension Set	2,000/-	24-03-99

2. A complete set of tender documents may be purchased by the interested bidders on submission of a written application and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Taka as mentioned in column-4 above against each tender in the shape of Bank Draft/Pay Order favouring Director, Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.

3. A bid bond equivalent to 2.50% of the offered amount shall be submitted with the tender.

4. Tender will be received up to 11.00 AM and will be opened at 11.30 AM in the prescribed date as mentioned in column-5 in presence of the intending bidders or their representatives if any.

5. Tender document shall neither be sent nor it will be received by Post/Telex/DHL/FAX etc.

6. Late bid shall not be received.

Biddut/Jan-1269(4)98+99
GD-199

Director of Purchase
BPDB, Dhaka.

Notice Inviting Tender

Sealed tenders in LCB Type-1 volume 1 of 3 are hereby invited by the undersigned from enlisted "A", "B" & "D" class contractor of BWDB during 1998-99 for the following works of Netrakona district. Tender will be received by the undersigned: Superintending Engineer, Dhaka O&M Circle, BWDB, Dhaka; Executive Engineer, Mymensingh O&M Division, BWDB, Mymensingh; Executive Engineer, Tangail O&M Division, BWDB, Tangail; Executive Engineer, Dhaka O&M Division-II, BWDB, Dhaka and the Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Dhaka from 18-3-99 to 21-3-99 (during office hours) and on 22-3-99 up to 12:00 Noon and will be opened on the same day (22-3-99) at 12:30 PM.

Tender documents will be available from Sonali Bank, WAPDA Branch, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka; Sonali Bank, Main Branch, Mymensingh; Sonali Bank Main Branch, Netrakona and the Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Dhaka up to 21-3-99 (during office hours). All other terms and conditions may be seen in the office of the undersigned at any working days during office hours.

Sl No	Name of sub-project	Tender No	Group No	Description of works with location	Estimated cost in Tk	Earnest money @2.50%	@ 1% for FD holder	Cost of tender document (Tk)	Time allowed	Class of contractor (BWDB)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Bank protective work of Kangsha river to save the Mohongonj Pilot High School & Mohongonj Bazar under Mohongonj Pourashava	07/98-99	1	Bank protection adjacent to Mohongonj Pilot High School & Bazar on the right bank of Kangsha river from 60m to 182m under 179-unexpected head in PS Mohongonj, Dist Netrakona during the year 1998-99	24,64,015/-	61,600/-	24,640/-	750/-	60 days	'A' & 'B' class.	
2	Bank protective work of Mogra river to save Dewan Bazar, T-Amin School, Dak Banglow & Khaliyuri-Modan road & construction of Nashir Khali regulator at Gonasher haor project	-do-	2	Right bank protective work of Mogra river near Dewan Bazar & T-Amin School at Modan from 75m to 151m under 179-unexpected head during the year 1998-99	14,84,980/-	37,125/-	14,850/-	750/-	60 days	'A' & 'B' class	
3	Singer beel Sub-Project	-do-	3	Repairing & maintenance of 2 Nos LLP inlet structure at 2.08km & 2.21km and gate fitting of Sekerpara outlet under Singer beel sub-project during the year 1998-99	46,135/-	1,153/-	461/-	400/-	30 days	'D' class	

PANI-393/98-99
GD-198

Md Abul Kalam
Executive Engineer
Netrakona O&M Division, BWDB
Netrakona.