

National

News snaps

Power connection given

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, May 12: Palli Biduy Samity-I (PBS-I) at Rupatali, at the outskirt of Barisal town has given power connections to 28,106 dwelling houses in 312 villages under seven thanas areas of Barisal and Jhalakati districts during last nine years.

According to PBS-I sources here, this samity brought seven thanas areas — sadar, Mehendiganj, Bakerganj, Hizla and Muliadi of Barisal district and sadar and Nalchiti of Jhalakati district under its electrification programme on commercial basis since 1990. PBS-I during this time also constructed 1,552 kilometres of electrical lines through which 32,345 power connections were provided to the consumers. Of these, there are 28,106 domestic, 3,363 commercial, 479 industrial, 24 irrigation and 373 other electrical power connections.

3 cheats arrested

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, May 12: People caught three alleged cheats red-handed with fake 500 taka notes at Muktagacha Bazar under Muktagacha thana here on May 5.

According to police and witnesses, three cheats identified as Omar Ali, Minto and Lukman of village Kawnia under sadar thana were caught when they were paying take after buying a cow at the bazar. People also recovered six fake 500 taka notes from their possession and took them to the toll collectors of the bazar. Later they were handed over to police.

Suicides up in Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, May 12: Suicide cases have been increasing alarmingly in four thanas of the district.

According to police, hospital and family sources, five persons including a housewife allegedly committed suicide in a week in different areas of the district. Samsur Rahman, 35, of village Ghoramara under the sadar thana killed himself by taking poison recently. Nripen Biswas, 18, of village Madhupur under Muhammadiya thana committed suicide after taking poison. On the same day Alomoti, 14, a teenager girl of village Darisul under Shalikha thana killed herself by hanging. Dolena Khatun, 25, wife of Atiar Rahman also allegedly committed suicide by taking poison recently.

15 hurt in road mishap

SUNAMGANJ, May 12: Some 15 people were injured, many of them seriously, when a bus skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch on Sylhet-Sunamganj Road at Janigao village on Friday morning, reports UNB.

Six of the injured were identified as Nur-e-Alam, 20, Anwar, 30, Abdus Sattar, 50, Sattajit, 30, Jallil, 32, and Ukil Datta, 50. The identity of others could not be known immediately. Police said two people including Nur-e-Alam were rushed to the district Sadar Hospital and another two at Sylhet Osmani Hospital. Legs and hands of the many of the injured were broken in the mishap. The driver of the Sunamganj-bound vehicle coming from Sylhet lost control over its steering as he tried to save three ducks crossing the road resulting in the mishap at 10.30 am. The vehicle was also damaged in the accident.

Buffalo goes berserk: 2 hurt

LALMONIRHAT, May 12: Two people were hurt grievously when a buffalo attacked them at west Doljor village in Aditmari thana in the district on Friday, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, the animal which was brought from the hill area by a brick-field owner suddenly went berserk and attacked Moimuddin, 40, and Abdul Kalam, 42. They were rushed to the Sadar Hospital in critical condition. The owner was using the large size animal for leveling soil and carrying goods.

Lightning kills young man

DINAJPUR, May 12: A young man was killed and his other family members received injuries when struck by lightning at Boirapipara village in Parbatipur here early hours on Saturday, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Subash Chandra Roy, 24. His wife, son and daughter were rushed to the local hospital. Meanwhile, the dead body of a 21-year-old unidentified girl was found in a marshy land at Haldibari village of Parbatipur town at 8 am on the same day. Local people suspected that the miscreants might have dumped the body killing her after rape.

Vegetable farming scheme

KISHOREGANJ, May 12: A total of 33,200 hectares of land have been brought under vegetable cultivation in seven districts under Dhaka Agriculture Extension Zone (DAEZ) in the current year, fixing the production target at 4,15,000 tons, reports UNB.

Of the total land, 4,800 hectares will be cultivated in Dhaka, 4,800 hectares in Narayanganj, 2,800 in Narsingdi, 2,800 in Munshiganj, 9,800 in Gazipur, 3,400 in Manikganj and 4,800 in Tangail, officials said. Meanwhile, the farmers have been provided with necessary loan, high yielding varieties of seeds, fertiliser, pesticides and other agri-inputs for successful implementation of the programme.

Uplift programme begins

KISHOREGANJ, May 12: District Relief Rehabilitation and Disaster Management Department has taken up 135 projects for the development of the rural infrastructure under Food for Work Programme in nine thanas in 1998-99 fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to the official sources, the government allotted 12,800 tonnes of wheat for implementation of the projects. Thanawani amount of allotment are: 130 tonnes in Itia thana, 110 tonnes in Mithamton thana, 155 tonnes in Bajitpur thana, 150 tonnes in Kuliarchar thana, 100 tonnes in Tarail thana, 185 tonnes in Bhairob thana, 110 tonnes in Hossainpur thana and 340 tonnes in Kishoreganj sadar thana.

Efforts on to ensure power

PATUAHKHALI, May 12: State Minister for Textiles AKM Zahangir Hossain said the present government was relentlessly working to ensure power supply to all the villages of the country, reports BSS.

The minister was addressing a meeting while inaugurating a three-kilometer 11 KV electricity supply line of Rural Electrification Board at Amtali Bazar under Dashmina thana. With the inauguration of the distribution line five thousand households will be benefited. The minister said power is one of the preconditions of national development and the present government has been working hard to accelerate development in the power sector.

Chickenpox in Laxmipur

LAXMIPUR, May 12: Chickenpox has broken out alarmingly in the district affecting some 200 people in one week, health department sources said, reports UNB.

Ramgati and Sadar thanas of the district are the worst affected areas. Some 50 people were reported affected in Char Manasa village in two days. Most of them are children and women. It is known that the affected people depend on the village quacks as there are no medicine for its treatment. To identify the cause of the disease Health department sources told that the disease has broken out for excessive humidity and lack of adequate water while taking bath.

2180 cows inseminated

NARSINGDI, May 12: A total of 2180 cows were brought under artificial insemination programme in Narsingdi district during 1998-99 fiscal year through 15 insemination centres, reports BSS.

According to district Livestock Department, out of total 15 centres 10 were run by frozen semen and the rest five by liquid semen collected locally. Awareness about the programme has remarkably been developed and farmers are showing interest to develop hybrid variety of the bullock.

1,272 km area electrified

CHUADANGA, May 12: A total of 1272 kilometre area have been electrified in all the four thanas of the district under the Rural Electrification Programme (REP), reports BSS.

The four thanas are — Chuadanga, Sadar, Alamdanga, Damruda and Jibannagar. According to an official source, of the total area 284 kilometre area have been electrified in Chuadanga Sadar thana, 515 kilometre in Alamdanga thana, 281 kilometre in Damruda thana and 192 kilometre in Jibannagar thana.

FWP implemented

RANGPUR, May 12: The work on 1,440 projects under Food for Works Programme FWP has been completed in the district in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

At least 6,677 tonnes of wheat were spent towards the completion of the projects. According to Relief and Rehabilitation Department sources, the projects included rural road developments and the earth work in different schools and mosques. With completion of the work, the road communication in the rural areas has been improved.



A bumper production of IRRI-Boro paddy has been achieved in Magura.

— Star photo

Archaeological monuments in Rajshahi being damaged

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, May 12: Hundreds of archaeological monuments are being damaged in Rajshahi division for lack of proper maintenance.

Regional Archaeology Office, established at Tetulota in Bogra in 1984, looks after 130 monuments all over 16 districts of Rajshahi division. But the Archaeology Office cannot maintain these monument for lack of sufficient manpower and money, sources said.

There are thousands of archaeological and historical monuments including the undiscovered ones in Rajshahi division. Excluding the monuments of Patharpur in Naogaon, Mohasthan in Bogra and Rangpur, all other identified and undiscovered monuments are decaying.

Rajshahi divisional office of the Directorate of Archaeology has sanctioned posts of only four first class and two second class officers and 19 other employees. Out of the total, two posts of Assistant Engineers, one post of Accountant, two posts of Store keepers and one post of Surveyor are lying vacant for a long time.

The Archaeology Office directly looks after only three monuments through three little teams of workers deputed there under the leadership of a custodian. All other monuments are lying unprotected under exposure to harms made by miscreants and nature. Most of these monuments are not visited by any of the employees of the Archaeology Office even in a year. So these monuments easily become victims of nature, as well as of miscreants. Bricks, stones and inscriptions are often stolen by the miscreants and damaged by ignorant people.

Influential people are taking the land of the monuments under their illegal possession every year in an increasing rate.

The number of archaeological monuments in Rajshahi division is higher than those in other divisions of the country. But the government does not pay due attention to the problems.

Rajshahi Regional Archaeology Office had got only about Taka 18.60 lakhs out of the total national budget of Taka 113.51 lakh for preservation and maintenance of the archaeological monuments in the fiscal year of 1996-97.

In 1997-98, the total budget was Taka 88 lakh, but Rajshahi got only Taka 28 lakh.

Rajshahi was given Taka 15.46 lakh out of the total national allocation of Taka 61.86 lakh in 1998-99 fiscal year.

There were many archaeological sites which needed excavation to unearth monuments. There are 203 sites in Rangpur, 143 in Dinajpur and 103 in Pabna.

Due to shortage of manpower and funds, the Archaeology Department cannot excavate these detected sites to discover the monuments.

Excavations in some sites were started, but are now lying incomplete for the same reasons.

In Rajshahi division, the detected and undiscovered monuments had been built during the Pal, the Sen, the Pathan and the Mughal dynasties.

If these archaeological sites are preserved and maintained well and roads are built for easy and safe transport, these can be sources of huge revenue.

Gaibandha villagers in misery

From K M Rezaul Hoque

GAIBANDHA, May 12: The people of Gaibandha are in grip of frustration following a series of crop damage, prolonged flood, drought and river erosion since last two years.

The sufferings of common people especially of farmers and labourers have been multiplied since 1998. During the period flood waters submerged a vast tract of land after staying for long 93 days. Prolonged floods have affected badly the vast areas of Gaibandha sadar, Fulchhari, Shaghata, Sadulpur and Gobindaganj thanas.

The flood water largely damaged Aman crop, jute and other standing crops. The labourers also remained jobless for long four months.

Being failed to harvest

maunds per acre of land. Last year soon after the recession of food water a dry spell continued throughout the district which prolonged for a pretty long time. During the period standing crops dried up in the field. Acute food crisis prevailed in the area. Many cattles died of different diseases and due to starvation.

This correspondent observed this during his visit to three shoal lands under Kamajani union. A total of 68 cattle died in different areas.

Acute joblessness also paralysed the labourers of the flood affected areas. During last two months over 50 persons of Bait Baitkamari under Kamajani union left elsewhere in search of work and food, but

they returned disappointed being failed to arrange any work to earn their livelihood.

Considering the post-flood situation Oxfam (Bangladesh) introduced Cash for Work Programme for 30 days in the month of January 99 just to rehabilitate the deprived labourers. Under this programme 6,300 males and females got work at the rate of Taka 60 per head each day.

Besides, for the survival of cattlehead Oxfam allocated Taka 600 for each of total 1,800 cattleheads of the poverty stricken families under Kamajani union. The programme included 20 kg wheat, 10 kg husk and 10 kg molasses for 30 days.

Aman crops the deprived farmers tried to overcome the crop deficit by farming Rabi crops. Due to presence of moisture in the crop fields the farmers could not grow Rabi crops like mustard seed, Kawn, wheat and pulse.

A good harvest of potato was marked during the period but the farmers were deprived of fair price of potato. During the harvesting period potatoes were sold between Tk 2 to 3 per kg. So the farmers hardly received the production cost of potatoes.

Meanwhile, the farmers cultivated wheat extensively to partially overcome loss of Aman crops. But the adverse weather went against the interest of poor farmers. They harvested only four to five maunds of wheat against 24 to 25

maunds per acre of land. Last year soon after the recession of food water a dry spell continued throughout the district which prolonged for a pretty long time. During the period standing crops dried up in the field. Acute food crisis prevailed in the area. Many cattles died of different diseases and due to starvation.

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