

Nat'l Housing Authority to be formed soon

CHITTAGONG, May 22: Minister for Public Works and Housing Engineer Mushtarrif Hussain today said that a national housing authority would soon be constituted to facilitate taking up of housing projects all over the country, reports BSS.

The proposal for forming the national housing authority (NHA) would be placed at the cabinet meeting soon, he said.

Speaking as chief guest at the installation ceremony of Bangabandhu Prakashtali Parishad, Chittagong branch, at the engineers' institution here, he said that the proposed housing authority would prepare housing projects in different regions of the country for providing housing facilities to the people at minimum cost.

The function was presided over by parishad convener Engineer Fazlullah, Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABD Mohiuddin Chowdhury was present as special guest.

Vice-president of Engineers Institution Nurul Huda, president of Bangabandhu Prakashtali Parishad AKM Ishaque, and Chowdhury Anisul Huq also spoke on the occasion.

The minister said that power problem existed during the rule of past governments. But the present government, he added, has been making all out efforts to solve the power supply problem. The system loss of power is being reduced gradually, he added.

Call for shifting proposed NAM confce centre

Sylhet Bibhag Unnayan Parishad brought out a procession in the city yesterday afternoon in support of their demand for shifting the proposed site of NAM centre from Osman Uddyan, reports UNB.

Addressing a rally prior to the procession at the Uddyan, the leaders of the parishad said the decision of shifting should be taken within May 30. Otherwise they threatened to go for greater movement in support of their demand.

The leaders also urged all to make a success the human chain programme at the Uddyan today.

Chaired by parishad president Advocate Abed Raja, the rally was addressed, among others, by Justice A Hasib, Mirza Aziz Ahmed Beg, Fayzunnesa Chowdhury, Dr Nooruddin Ahmed, Badul Alam, Syed Khalilur Rahman, Smita Wahid and Advocate MA Khan.

AGM of BPIA held

The Annual General Meeting of Bangladesh Printing Industries Association (BPIA) and the installation of its office bearers was held yesterday, reports BSS.

Political Advisor to the Prime Minister Dr SA Malek was the chief guest on the occasion, while State Minister for Textiles KM Zahangir was the special guest.

Presided over by Administrator of the association Shafiqul Alam, the function was addressed by newly elected President and Secretary of the association Rabbani Jabbar and Kazi Abdul Wadud.

Dr Malek lauded the election process of the association and said democracy could be given an institutional shape only through elections under constitutional process.

KM Zahangir urged the leaders of the association to put their best efforts in the printing sector to face the challenges of the coming century.

Road mishaps

Two die in Laxmipur, Magura

LAXMIPUR, May 22: A bank officer was killed and four other people were critically injured in a road accident at Miraberi in Ramgati thana here, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Md. Ahsan Haque (50), principal officer of Sonali Bank, Laxmipur Branch.

Witnesses said the accident took place when a jeep of the bank fell into a roadside ditch on way to the office from Ramgati thana after depositing cash in two branches there.

Of the injured, CBA leader Golam Mostafa was sent to Dhaka in a critical condition while three others, identified as jeep driver Md. Mohiuddin Khan, 32, Sirajul Islam, 36, and Abu Hossain, 40, were admitted to the Sadar hospital.

Another report from Magura adds: A minor schoolboy was killed in an accident in front of a textile mill in Sadar thana on Magura-Jessore road on May 15.

Police said, Russell, 8, a student of Bhaina Asia Primary School, met the tragic end of his life when a Jessor-bound bus knocked him down on the road. He died on the spot.

In another incident, at least 20 people were injured in a bus accident near Magura graveyard on Magura-Narail road on the same day.

Workshop held in Khulna

KHULNA, May 22: A training workshop on ISO 9000 Quality Management System concluded here in Khulna on May 13, reports BSS.

SGS Bangladesh Limited organised the workshop.

A total of 21 participants spoke in the workshop of different aspects of quality management.

Experts suggest at BUET workshop

Interdisciplinary, eclectic research vital to address water sector issues

Engineers, academicians, officials and diplomats at a workshop at BUET (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology) yesterday opined that long-term interdisciplinary and eclectic research would pave avenues for addressing different water sector issues, reports BSS.

They said different problems including river regulation, embankment protection, coastal erosion and hazards relating to integrated water resources management could be resolved through actions in conformity with the country and culture, specific recommendations of the effective research in the field of water resource engineering.

Prof Nooruddin Ahmed said that a long-term research plan has been formulated incorporating different problems in the field of water resources engineering (WRE) while facilities are now available in Bangladesh to address applied topics and problems like river regulation, bank protection, coastal erosion, and integrated water resource management.

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The VC said R and D (research and development) is must for staying up-to-date with contemporary engineering practices, improving project performance and finding solutions that are effective for a given country under local conditions.

He noted that linkage between universities of different countries are must and has been found useful in keeping track of changes and innovations in the field of research, teaching and development of the faculty members.

The VC also said that opportunities for higher education in Bangladesh is limited and although the number of universities and institutions of higher education are increasing, especially with recent private initiatives, many new problems have emerged.

Prof Nooruddin Ahmed said that a record increase was observed in the number of students seeking admission in the universities while limited resources, rapidly expanding and changing knowledge base a critical shortage of experienced teachers, rapid obsolescence and deterioration of laboratory equipment, meager library service and the need to generate new knowledge and lack of strategies for development of human resources have made the academic institutions vulnerable.

Officials said prisoners Syed and Nekbar gave the policemen drug and fled leaving behind the custodians senseless in the train when it reached Ishwardi station. They were travelling in Rajshahi-bound 'Kapatakkho' mail train.

5 cops suspended in Bagerhat

BAGERHAT, May 22: Five policemen of Sadar Thana were suspended today for negligence of duty, reports UNB.

Two under-trial prisoners escaped from the custody of the policemen when taking them to Rajshahi court for trial.

Those suspended are havildar Bazlur Rahman and constables Babul, Yunus, Anwar and Babul-2.

Officials said prisoners Syed and Nekbar gave the policemen drug and fled leaving behind the custodians senseless in the train when it reached Ishwardi station. They were travelling in Rajshahi-bound 'Kapatakkho' mail train.

Govt can't be removed thru' force: Zillur

KISHOREGANJ, May 22: LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman said here today that the Awami League government could not be removed from power through intrigues, movement and hartals, reports BSS.

Speaking as the chief guest at a public meeting at Astagram local ground, Rahman said the opposition BNP was bent upon going to power even through conspiracies sensing that it would not be able to do the same through voting.

The Minister said opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia had organised the road march along with autocrat Ershad and 'collaborator' Golam Azam since she has become impatient for power. He said the three evil cliques were engaged in a new conspiracy to oust the elected government with a motive to push back the country to the post-1975 situation.

Reiterating the government's firm determination to curb terrorism, Rahman said stern legal actions were being taken against those engaged in extortion, hijacking and sabotage. The Minister described as false the allegation of the opposition leader regarding political harassment and repression on the opposition leaders and workers.

Bangladesh envoy presents credentials

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladeshi Ambassador to Lebanon presented his credentials to the Lebanese President General Emile Lahoud on May 18, foreign ministry sources said.

Ambassador Tufail K Haider, resident in Tehran, presented the credentials to the Lebanese President at the Presidential palace.

Earlier, Ambassador Haider held separate meetings with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Lebanon Dr Salim El-Hoss and El-Hoss and Secretary General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr El-Hassan.

School teacher shot dead in Satkhira

SATKHIRA, May 22: A school teacher was shot dead by some armed miscreants at Khersha village under Tala Thana on Wednesday night, reports BSS.

The victim was identified as Yamin Ali, 30, of Khersha village under Tala Thana. He was a teacher of Khersha Girls High School.

Police sources said, some armed miscreants raided the home of Yamin Ali in the night entering his room after breaking open the door. They shot at him from close range.

Yamin Ali died on the spot.

Youth killed in Magura

MAGURA, May 22: A youth was killed and at least 10 people were injured, two critically, in a clash between two rival groups at Dhalahara village in Sadar thana on Friday, reports UNB.

Police and local people said supporters of UP members Khaled and Awal locked in the clash over establishing supremacy in the area leaving a dozen people injured.

Of the injured Rakib, Sakawat and Jubair were admitted to Sadar Hospital. Of them, Rakib succumbed to his injuries on the way to Dhaka this morning.

Separate cases were filed with Magura police in this connection. Police arrested 42 people of the both groups.

A temporary police camp has been set up at the village to avert further clashes.

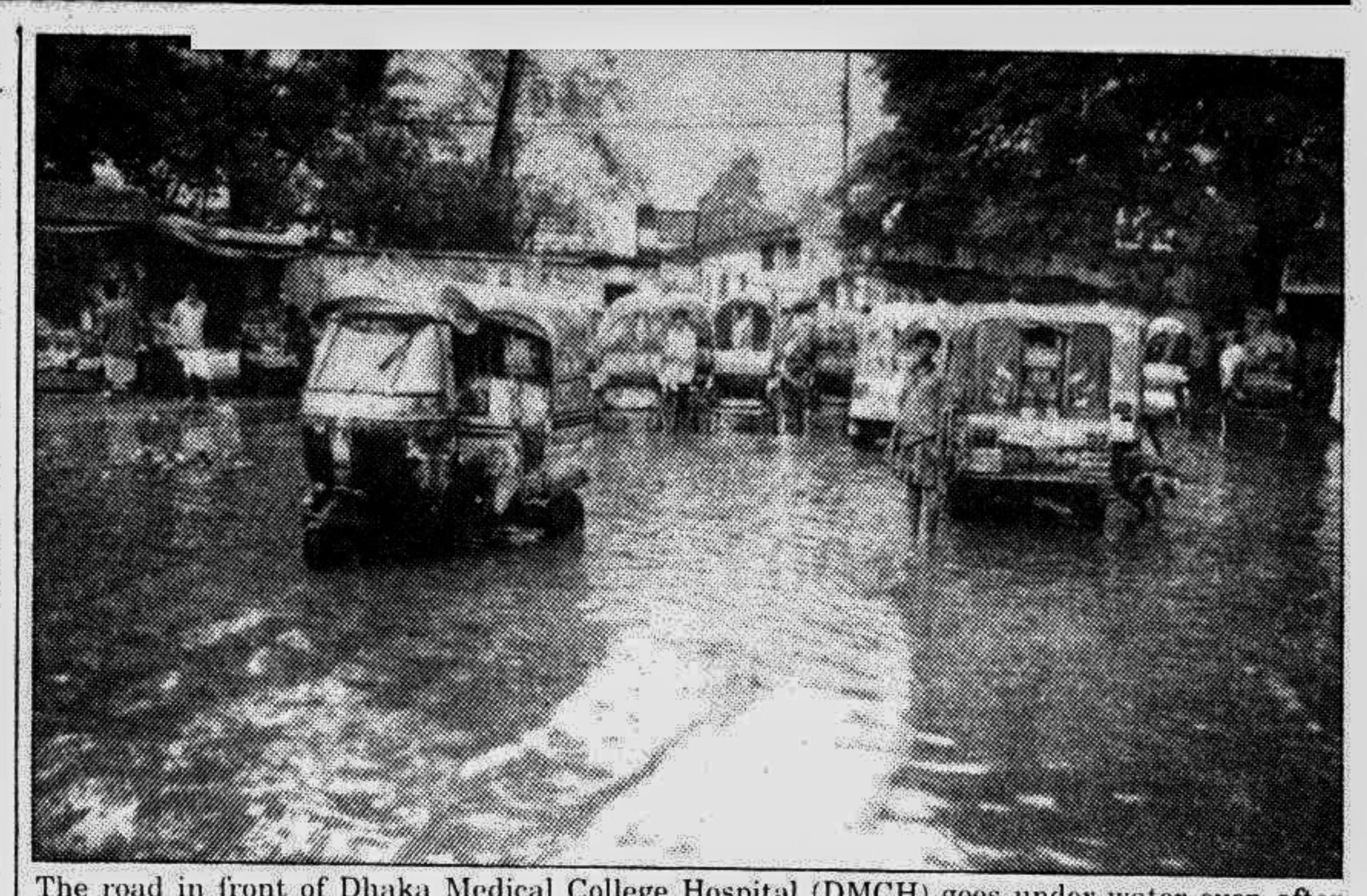
Training for HR activists ends

CHITTAGONG, May 22: A two-day training programme for ten workers of Bangladesh Human Rights Organisation ended here today, reports BSS.

The training course was inaugurated by secretary general of the organisation MR Mahbub while Chittagong district branch President Advocate Rofiqul Kader presided over the inaugural session held here on Friday last.

Eminent lawyers including Chittagong District Bar Association President Advocate Nurul Safa Talukdar, former President of the District Bar Association Advocate Kabir Chowdhury, Advocate Syed Forkan Ahmad and Journalist Nazir Ahmad spoke on different aspects of human rights during the training.

On the concluding day today Secretary General MR Mahbub called upon the educated section of the people to make the common people aware of their rights and help them in proper application of laws of the land.



The road in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) goes under water even after a brief spell of rain. This picture was taken after yesterday's rain.

— Star photo

Alternative arrangements must be made before going for eviction of city slums'

Eminent personalities representing different professional groups yesterday urged the government to make alternative arrangements before going for eviction of slums from Dhaka city, reports BSS.

In support of their proposal, they in a session of exchange of views, said abrupt eviction of 30 lakh slum dwellers from Dhaka city would create a serious socio-politico-economic crisis in the country.

On the other hand, they advised the government to devise ways to use this vast manpower in development pursuits through providing them with skills and expertise in different trade and occupation.

The personalities said the government should immediately retrieve 1,100 khas land from the illegal occupation of housing companies and allow private builders to erect multi-storyed buildings on a part of it for the slum dwellers who could buy flats on 12 to 15 years' lease basis.

Poet Shamsur Rahman was the chief guest at the session with the Chairman of ADAB Dr

Kazi Faruq Ahmed presiding.

Among others, BFUJ president Abdul Kalam Azad, journalist Shahriar Kabir, Dr Nazrul Islam of Urban Development Studies Centre, Dr Masoom of Dhaka University, Prof Kazi Faruq Ahmed of Bangladesh College Teachers' Association and A K M Khorshed Alam of Habitat, Bangladesh, took part in the discussion.

Three slum dwellers — Abdul Aziz, Anwara Begum and Fatema — also took part in the discussion and ruled out the involvement of any slum dweller in the terrorist activities but said some of them were being used forcibly by terrorists as tools. Poet Shamsur Rahman

said, the poor slum dwellers should not be treated as escape goats in the name of terrorists as these anti-social elements are to be found in all spheres of national life.

"I strongly believe the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will make alternative arrangements for the rehabilitation of slum dwellers before their eviction," he said.

Poet Shamsur Rahman was

Dr Kazi Faruq Ahmed, in his presidential speech, said the slum dwellers could be used as an effective working force through developing their skills and expertise as part of the government's ongoing poverty alleviation programme.

"In the greater interest of good governance and poverty alleviation, slums should be developed as partners in development activities to help the dwellers contribute to the economy," he said.

The ADAB Chairman said the Government could allow NGOs and private builders to construct low-cost multi-storied buildings for the slum dwellers who could buy flats on easy installments in 12 to 15 years period.

Other speakers strongly advocated for forming committees at ward, union and thana levels involving all social forces against terrorism.

They said slums should not be identified as the only hub of terrorists but other spheres of national life should be brought into serious consideration to identify terrorists.



Bangabir Kader Siddiqi addressing a meeting of Muktijoddha Kendriyo Samannay Parishad at Shaheed Alauddin Math in the city yesterday. The Parishad demanded setting up of a separate Ministry for the freedom fighters and a monthly allowance of Tk 2000 for all of them.

— Star photo

What's on today . . .

Int'l conference: National Committee for Celebration of Nazrul Birth Centenary (NCCNBC) will hold the second day of an international conference on Kazi Nazrul Islam. Venue: Nazrul Institute, House No 330B, Rd No 28 (old), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 10:00 am.

Meeting: The weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Greater Dhaka will be held. Venue: Officers' Club, Bailey Road. Time: 5:30 pm.

Film show: Bangladesh Short Film Forum in association with Goethe Institut will screen a documentary "Location Berlin" about the years after fall of the wall. Venue: Goethe Institut, House No 10, Rd No 9 (new), Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6:30 pm.

52 held on various charges in Habiganj, Sylhet

Police arrested 52 people on various charges from different areas of Habiganj and Sylhet districts last week, reports UNB.

Earlier, police also caught a drug trader named Babul along with 29 bottles of Indian smuggled phenisidyl syrup from Rajnagar in the town.

Separate cases were filed with the police. Another report from Sylhet adds: BDR jawans in a drive seized Indian wine and Nasiruddin Bidi worth Tk 2 lakh from frontier Protapbari area in Goainghat thana last week. Sources said the patrol team recovered the contraband while being smuggled into the area from India.

On May 16, acting on a tip-off, BDR jawans raided Moglabazar in Sadar thana and seized Nasiruddin Bidi worth about Tk 50,000 from a shop in the bazar. Police also nabbed five people along with 2 kg of hemp from Bandar Bazar and rail-gate area on May 17.

The arrested were identified as Hira Mia, Alauddin, Khurshed Mia, Moinuddin and Nazrul Rahman.

In a special drive, police also rounded up 39 people from different areas of the district today, reports UNB.

A police team, led by SP, arrested a group of 17 pirates from Char Alokkia in Shibalong thana this morning, official sources said.

Meanwhile 14 others were arrested in the district in separate drives.

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Take part in dev work, Sajeda tells local leaders

NAGARKANDA, Faridpur, May 22: Minister for Forest and Environment Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury today warned against the acts of terrorism and extortion and said terrorists and extortionists would not be tolerated whichever party they belonged to, reports BSS.