

News snaps

Killing condemned

KISHOREGANJ, July 18: District Awami Parishad organised a protest meeting on the killing of police constable Farhad at district Awami League office on Tuesday, reports BSS.

Presided over by the President of Awami Parishad Mahabur Rahman, the meeting condemned the killing of constable Farhad. The speakers said that the killing of Farhad was a planned and motivated act. The meeting was attended and addressed by Advocate Kamrul Ahsan, Principal Abdul Rashid, Zinnatul Islam, Mia Muhammad Ferdous, Nurunnabi, Biraj Kumar Shah, Abu Imam, Ziauddin Ahmed and Shahabuddin Thakur.

Teacher suspended

NOOGAON, July 18: A teacher of Rangamati High School in Dhamorhat thana has been suspended for his alleged misconduct with a girl student, reports UNB.

School sources said physical instructor of the school Rezwan Hossain had been suspended for his indecent behaviour with a girl student of class eight. The school management took action against the teacher on June 7 as the allegation brought against him was proved after investigation.

TLM programme

ARICHA (Manikganj), July 18: The weeklong Total Literacy Movement (TLM) programme sponsored by Prodipta Manikganj concluded at Shivalaya Thana Parishad auditorium last week, reports BSS.

A cultural function and prize distribution ceremony was held on the occasion. The Deputy Commissioner, Manikganj, Sheikh Mohammad Mozahar Uddin attended the function as the chief guest. Additional District Magistrate Mahfuzur Rahman, Sivalaya, Thana Nirbahi Officer Ashraful Mosadded and Thana Awami League president Abdul Hye Tahardar, among others, spoke on the occasion. The Total Literacy Movement has been very successful in different unions of Sivalaya thana.

Ratha Jatra celebrated

COMILLA, July 18: Ratha Jatra, one of the most significant festivals of the Hindu community, was celebrated here on July 14 with due religious fervour, reports BSS.

A function was held at Jagannathbari premises here on the occasion. Advocate Adhir Ranjan Ghose presided over the function. ATM Shamsul Hoque, chairman of the Public Administration Reform Commission attended the function as the chief guest while Whip of the Jatra Sangsad Mujibul Haq was present as special guest. Hundreds of men, women and children participated in the Ratha Jatra festival.

BCL leader arrested

MANIKGANJ, July 18: A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader of Debendra Biswa University College was arrested from the court premises here on Tuesday for assaulting a cop, reports UNB.

Police said BCL General Secretary of the college Abdur Razzak alias Raja beat a court police, Abul Kalam Azad, and tore down his uniform following an altercation with him. Police later on arrested Raja from the court premises at 2 pm after a case was filed with sadar police. The arrest of Raja, the BCL leader triggered tension in the town. Police had taken stringent security measures.

Rangamati Poura budget announced

RANGAMATI, July 18: Rangamati Pourashava has announced a Tk 3.96 crore budget for the 1999-2000 fiscal, reports UNB.

Pourashava Chairman Habibur Rahman Habib announced the budget on Wednesday without imposing any new taxes. Of the total amount, Tk 2.27 crore have been earmarked for revenue while Tk 1.69 crore for development sectors.

Makalkandi haor project progressing

HABIGANJ, July 18: Work on the nearly Tk 3.5 crore Makalkandi Haor Project in Baniachang thana is progressing fast, reports UNB.

Local Water Development Board (WDB) sources said the project work started in fiscal 1996-97 to protect Boro crops from the onslaughts of flood and provide irrigation facilities. The work includes construction of 17 km submerged embankment, seven km peripheral embankment and eight sluice gates. Eighty-three per cent work have been completed and the rest is expected to be complete within the current fiscal year.

Population Day observed

MADARIPUR, July 18: The World Population Day was observed in the district through various programmes on July 11, reports BSS.

A discussion meeting on the significance of population control and economic development was held to mark the occasion in the local Muktiyodha auditorium. The Deputy Director, Family Planning, Kazi Shahadat Hossain presided over the meeting. Deputy Commissioner Farhad Rahman attended the discussion as the chief guest. Shahnaz Parveen and Babul Kazi, among others, discussed various aspects of observance of the day.

Workshop on Road Safety

TANGAIL, July 18: A workshop on Development of Road Safety and handbills on What Has to Be Done Immediately After Road Accident and Problems of and Helps for Female Road Users and Female Bus Passengers was held at Tangail LGED auditorium on Wednesday, reports BSS.

The workshop was jointly sponsored by Local Government Engineering Department and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Tangail. A total of 30 participants including 15 women belonging to relevant departments and educational institutions, vehicle associations, journalists and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) took part in the workshop. MKA Mstahil Assistant Director BRTA and M Sellim, Environmentalist delivered introductory lectures on the topics in the opening session, presided over by Hasan Kabir Khasru, Executive Engineer, LGED, Tangail.

Loans disbursed among the poor

MANIKGANJ, July 18: Loans under Family-based Self-Employment Programme of the Youth Development Directorate were disbursed among the rural poor at a function recently held at Ghior Thana Parishad, reports BSS.

Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Finance M Amjad Hossain, Thana Nirbahi Officer, Ghior ASM Mahbubul Alam and Director of the Youth Development Directorate Dipendra Chandra Pal, among others, were present on the occasion. The cheques of Taka 5,000 each have been disbursed among 50 persons both male and female of village Thakurkandi.

Ratha Jatra in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, July 18: Ratha Jatra, one of the greatest Hindu religious festivals, was celebrated in Sirajganj town and other rural areas on Wednesday, reports BSS.

A discussion on the significance of the festival was held at Sree Sree Jaykali Mandir premises here. Sibjit Kumar Raj presided over the function. Shadhu Kamal Ray, Asit Kumar Raj, Jiten Kundu, Khilish Chandra Ray and Narayan Chandra Ray spoke on the occasion. A Ratha Jatra Mela was held at Sirajganj town on the occasion.

Hemp plants recovered

MADARIPUR, July 18: The Narcotics Control Department recently recovered a large number of hemp plants and 200 grams of hemp from two places of Rajoir thana, reports BSS.

An official source said, acting on a tip-off of the personnel of the Narcotics Control Department raided the house of Kalyan Chowkidar of village Dakhin Rajoir and seized the plants of hemp. The house-owner cultivated the plants in his courtyard. In another drive 200 grams of hemp was seized from Unus Mia of village Ghosalkandi.

Uplift projects implemented

HABIGANJ, July 18: The District Council implemented 40 development projects in eight thanas in 1998-99 fiscal at a cost of Tk 87.50 lakh, reports UNB.

The projects included carpeting on 15 connecting roads, construction of nine bridges, 12 culverts, two passenger shades, two community centres and renovation of two union council bahans and four bungalows. Officials of the council had undertaken 53 development projects, involving Tk 1.35 crore, in the fiscal. The rest of the projects are expected to be completed by next two months.

Miscreant with revolver arrested

NARSINGDI, July 18: Narsingdi sadar thana police arrested an armed miscreant with a Japan-made revolver from village Toroa recently, police said, reports BSS.

Acting on a secret information police raided the house of Mohammad Ali and arrested Shaiful Islam. Police recovered a Japanese revolver from his possession.

Plan to construct new jail bldg in Netrakona

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, July 18: District and sessions judge, police super and civil surgeon of the district recently visited the Netrakona district jail to see themselves the condition of the prisoners.

District and sessions judge AKM Ishiaque Hossain, police super Abul Kashem Ferdous and civil surgeon MA Baset visited different departments of the prison and expressed dissatisfaction with the mismanagement in the jail.

The visit came in the wake of allegation that the condition in the jail is not fit for living there. The jail now provides accommodation for 542 against the capacity of only 266.

When contacted the judge told The Daily Star that the prisoners are living in sub human condition. In the female ward, 20 prisoners are accommodated against the capacity of only three, he added.

What worried the judge most was that a good number of prisoners have been staying in the

prison for a long time without trial.

The quality of food in the prison also poor, sources said. The officials also complained about the lack of sanitation facility of the jail.

Medicare facility in the jail is not adequate for so many prisoners. Residential medical officer of Netrakona Sadar Hospital, in addition to his usual duty, attends 20 to 25 patients in the jail every day.

Considering the accommodation problem in the jail, the government has taken up a plan to construct a new jail building near Netrakona police line to get rid of the problem, the district jailer told The Daily Star that.

Our Satkhira correspondent reports: Poor accommodation and sanitation facilities have multiplied the woes of Satkhira jail inmates.

The over-crowded prison, which was built on one acre of land during the British regime, lacks other facilities, including

drinking water, jail sources said.

The prison converted into district jail in 1997 now provides accommodation for 763 inmates, including 21 females, against the capacity of only 90, including 12 females.

Most of the inmates cannot sleep at night for want of space and pass night sitting, jail insiders said.

Every morning a long queue in front of latrines and bathrooms, which have already become unfit for use, is common feature.

The scarcity of pure drinking water is another major problem for the inmates. Many of them also pass days without taking bath due to shortage of water.

The dilapidated condition of the jail buildings is a constant threat to the prisoners. Many holes and cracks have developed on the walls and the roofs. Rain waters leak through cracks. The buildings may collapse any time, sources said.



The battle against nature: People are trying to protect Tajkharkandi, Chandpur by dumping trees, brick-bags and blocks from erosion of the River Meghna. — Star photo

Mismanagement causes sufferings to Madaripur Child Home orphans

MADARIPUR, July 18: Alleged irregularities and mismanagement in the government-run Child Home here have been causing immense suffering to the inmates and hampering their education, reports UNB.

The Home, housed in an abandoned building in Kulpaddina area, four kilometers from the district town, is in a pitiable condition.

The narrow rooms of the home have no furniture, except a bed on which four inmates have to sleep in cramped position. Doors and windows are

mostly broken, and some of the covered with bamboo slips.

The orphans alleged that they were served with low quality foods and in less quantity violating the standard menu, thus hampering both mental and physical growth.

Meanwhile, the display board showed 100 students study at the Home while the register for the year 1999 gave the figure as 81.

Of the students, four are studying at college level, five are SSC examinees, 11 in class X, five in class IX, eight in class VIII, nine in class VII, 16 in

class VI, two in class V 10 in class IV, five in class III and six in class II.

It is also alleged that nine students of the Home were abstaining for long, but the authorities did not take any action.

State minister for Social Welfare Dr Mozammel Hossain, who visited the Home recently, expressed dissatisfaction with its overall condition.

Monthly allocation per orphan at the Home is Tk 720, but it was alleged that the authorities do not spend more than Tk 500.

Set up more jute based handloom industries in N-region

NATORE, July 18: It is necessary to set up more jute-based handloom industries in the northern region to stimulate the country's struggling jute sector, said experts, reports UNB.

They said paper and partex manufacturing mills, which need green jute, could also be set up there to inspire the jute growers.

Meanwhile, jute production

Influenza, viral fever in Gopalganj

GOPALGANJ, July 18: Influenza and viral fever has broken out in alarming proportion affecting around 65 per cent people in five thanas, reports UNB.

The extremely poor people living in rural areas and suffering from malnutrition since long were the worst sufferers, officials said.

They also identified bad sanitation and adulterated food as the cause for outbreak of the disease.

The poor people working in the fields and living in slums might also be affected by influenza during these rainy days, they added.

The worst affected thanas are Tungipara, Kotalipara, Kashiani and some parts of Sadar.

Almost every family has one or two patients suffering from viral fever, local people said, adding that the thana health complexes with inadequate supply of medicines were not in a position to give proper treatment to the patients.

This forced the affected people to buy medicine from outside, but poor patients cannot bear the expenses due to rising prices.

With the outbreak of the two common diseases, a section of unscrupulous drug sellers have increased the prices of medicine to make a windfall profit at the cost of the miseries of the poor people.

in 16 northern districts appears to fall far short of target due to unfavourable weather and lack of quality seeds dashing the growing sense of optimism among the growers.

Official sources said most farmers could not bring their lands under jute cultivation due to excessive moisture and seed crisis at the peak period (January-February) of jute farming.

They said some 1.25 lakh hectares of land have been brought under jute cultivation this year against the target of 181,868 hectares.

Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) set the target projecting 17.51 lakh bales of jute production.

Citing some other reasons behind the gradual fall in jute production, experts said the growers have virtually lost their interests in jute farming

for lack of necessary support from the government.

The farmers could not even make up their production cost for the last three consecutive years, they said.

He said many jute growers have already given up commercial production of jute and they are now producing a little amount of jute only to meet their household requirements.

A good number of farmers said they sold 50 kg of jute at Tk 280 up to 1995, but after '95 the price of same quantity of jute came down to Tk 210.

They said the production cost of each 40 kg of jute is about Tk 260 but we have to incur a loss of Tk 50 for producing 40 kg of jute.

The DAE officials said this situation created after BJMC stopped purchasing jute in the northern region since 1997 due to 'lack of funds'.

Construction work of Bangabandhu Hall yet to start

From Kamran Reza Chowdhury RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, July 18: The construction work of the proposed Bangabandhu Hall is yet to start.

The decision to construct the residential hall at a cost of Tk three crore was taken about two years ago to lessen the accommodation problem of male students of the university.

The VC in an interview with The Daily Star in April, 1998 said the construction work of the hall would be started by the end of 1998.

The VC also made the pledge to build the 4th Science Building and a central mandir, temple, besides TSC building on the campus. The first phase construction work of TSC, however, is almost complete.

However, Vice Chancellor Professor Abdul Khaleque, in his address at the 18th Senate session, said that the construction work of the proposed hall would be started very soon, according to a press release issued recently by the Press, Publication and Public Relation Department of the university.

The university at present has 14 students dormitories. Of them, four are meant for female students.

Each kg Hilsa now Tk 190 in Natore market

From Our Correspondent NATORE, July 18: Hilsa fish is now being sold at Tk 190 per kg in the local markets.

Traders said poor supply of hilsa fish has raised its price.

In the early days of the rainy season, usually hilsa is rarely found in the local markets. Traders of Barisal, Chandpur and Chittagong could not supply adequate quantity of fish in this season.

Moreover, a huge quantity of hilsa is being smuggled out of the country on their way to the northern region, it has been widely alleged.

Supply of other species of fish has also reduced resulting in its higher price.

Small shrimps are being sold at more than Tk 100 per kg.

Big species fish have become almost rare. A medium size Rupi or Pangus is being sold at Tk 80 per kg.

Teen found dead in Jhenidah

From Our correspondent JHENIDAH, July 18: A motor garage worker was found dead in the town recently.

According to police, Anwar Hossain, 16, who worked as a helper in a motor garage of one Abul Hossain of Arappur Jantala, was seen hanging from the ceiling of the garage.

Family members said that there were many marks on the body. Anwar was in fact killed.

Police sent the body to Jhenidah sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

An unnatural death (UD) case was lodged with Jhenidah thana in this connection.

In Moulvibazar Frustrating revenue recovery rate

MOULVIBAZAR, July 18: Revenue collection in the district during the outgoing fiscal seems to fall far short of the target as its first nine months showed a very frustrating recovery rate, reports UNB.

According to competent sources, some Tk 1.7 crore was collected in revenue from six thanas during the period against the target of Tk 21.53 crore.

They said a total of Tk 1.01 crore was collected as land development tax during the period against the target of Tk 11.2 crore, showing 9.13 per cent recovery rate.

Another amount of Tk 8.68 lakh was realised from government, non-government and autonomous bodies, also as land development tax against the target of Tk 5.73 crore. The recovery success here was only 1.51 per cent.

A total of Tk 4.13 lakh was collected as leasing out fees of vested property against the target of Tk 1.35 crore. The recovery rate here was 3 per cent.

Only 10 out of 815 rent certificate cases were disposed off during the period and the revenue collection from this sector was 0.68 lakh against the target of Tk 3.04 crore. The recovery rate was only 0.22 per cent.

Of the 1956 general certificate cases, involving Tk 6.24 crore, 22 cases were settled

during the period. A total of Tk 1.40 lakh were collected, showing only 0.22 per cent recovery rate.

Unhappy with the poor revenue collection, the district administration has directed the TNOs, AOs (Land) and Tahasildars to be more active to achieve the revenue collection target.

The TNOs have been asked to issue 'show cause' notices against those Tahasildars who would fail to achieve 40 per cent of the revenue collection target.

Saikupa health complex beset with problems

JHENIDAH, July 18: Saikupa Thana Health Complex in the district is beset with various problems including shortage of physicians and medicines, depriving people of the locality of necessary medical treatment.

Posts of one medical officer for surgery, one junior consultant for anaesthesia, one dental surgeon and two posts of general medical officer have been lying vacant for a long time causing serious inconveniences to patients.

Moreover, a huge quantity of hilsa is being smuggled out of the country on their way to the northern region, it has been widely alleged.

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created a great problem for providing proper health services to indoor and outdoor patients.

The health complex is also facing severe scarcity of patient beds, hospital sources said. It has 31 beds, which are quite inadequate for huge number of patients.

At least 230 patients visit the outdoor of the health complex daily. Only four physicians and THFPO cannot attend them as they (doctors) have to attend emergency cases.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to look into the existing problems of the health complex and take immediate measures to solve it.

Smugglers' bid to enter into Bangladesh foiled

SATKHIRA, July 18: A tailor was injured when BDR jawans opened fire on a group of alleged smugglers, near the Indian border in Abaderhat area on Tuesday morning, reports UNB.

Sources said BDR 12 Battalion swung into action as a group of smugglers were entering into Bangladesh with Indian goods, including sugar and contraband phensidyl.

When challenged, the smugglers attacked the BDR jawans forcing them to open fire that left Abdul Latif, 25, injured.

Other members of the group of smugglers managed to flee leaving behind the goods.

The injured was admitted to the district hospital for treatment.

Discussion on Nazrul in Barisal

BARISAL, July 18: A discussion to mark the birth centenary of the national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam was held Thursday morning in the Aswini Kumar Town Hall here, reports BSS.

Organised by Nazrul Sangsad, the discussion was presided over by Mosarraf Hossain Nannu, president of the organisation.

Barisal Divisional Commissioner Yahiya Mollah attended the function as the chief guest.

Sudhir Sen, Mihir Dutta and Prof. Badir Rahman, among others, took part in the discussion.

The participants paid rich tributes to the poet and said Nazrul Islam was not only a great poet in the Bangla literature but also a great revolutionary who played a vital role in the independence movement of the subcontinent.



Grassroots' renewable energy: A local NGO of Cox's Bazaar has set up five bio-gas plants in Jhilongja village. — Star photo