

News snaps

Cotton farming on 1,708 hectares

RANGPUR, Oct 8: Cotton Development Board has brought 1,708 hectares of land under cotton cultivation in eight districts of Rangpur and Thakurgaon zone during the current season, reports UNB.

The districts are Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Nilphamari and Lamonirhat in Rangpur zone and Thakurgaon, Dinajpur and Panchagarh in Thakurgaon zone. Official sources said about 2,000 metric tons of seed cotton are expected to be produced in the districts with successful implementation of the programme. To achieve the target, the board has supplied the farmers with seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and loans.

Work progressing

COMILLA, Oct 8: Facilities Department is implementing a development project in Comilla Victoria Government College at a cost of Taka one crore 14 lakh, reports BSS.

The project includes construction of academic and Chemistry Department buildings of the college. Work of the project is progressing. Seventy per cent work has been completed and rest of the work is expected to be completed by next June.

Customs earns good revenue

MEHERPUR, Oct 8: The Customs and VAT Department earned Taka 45.79 lakh as taxes here in the 1998-1999 fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to official sources, the revenue collection was five per cent higher in 1998-1999 than that of the 1997-1998 fiscal year. The largest portion of the revenue was received from cinema halls, jewellery shops, video shops, brick fields and bidi factories.

13 alleged criminals arrested

MANIKGANJ, Oct 8: A team of Bangladesh Navy arrested 13 people allegedly on charges of various crimes from Arichahat area on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The arrested are: Yakub, 35, Kalu, 22, Ibrahim, 30, Aynal, 28, Alamgir, 25, Nuru Mia, 28, Ismail, 28, Jafar, 25, Hasen, 27, Ha, 25, Shahidur, 30, Atiar, 25, and Panna, 48. Police said the arrested had long been committing various crimes, including drug trafficking in the area.

Uplift projects progressing

MEHERPUR, Oct 8: The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has been implementing a project at a cost of Taka 69 lakh for the construction of a road and several culverts in Sadar thana of Gangni upazilla in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to official sources, the construction work of a road and five culverts is in full swing and will be completed by early 2000. When completed not only communication network but also drainage and irrigation system will be improved in the area. Water-logging problem will also be mitigated.

VGD wheat distributed

MAGURA, Oct 8: Some 750 metric tons of wheat will be distributed free among 2,106 families under VGD programme in the current fiscal, reports UNB.

The thana-wise breakup of the families: Sadar 390, Sripur 240, Shalikh 210 and Muhammadpur 1,266, according to officials. Each family will get 30 kgs of wheat a month. The distribution programme began in July and it will continue till June 2000.

Shortage of doctors in hospitals

KUSHTIA, Oct 8: People in six thanas are being denied of proper medicare facilities due to shortage of doctors and other basic amenities in the government hospitals and health complexes, reports UNB.

Amid hectic government campaign to reach health care facilities to the doorsteps of the common people, at least 40 posts of the doctors have been lying vacant in different health centers here since long adding to the sufferings of poor people. Private clinics and pathological laboratories are doing brisk business taking advantage of the situation. Local people complained that government doctors remained busy with private practice in different clinics neglecting their official duties.

Elderly Day observed

MADARIPUR, Oct 8: A discussion meeting was held at 'Swadhinita Angan' premises here on October 1 in observance of the International Elderly Day, reports BSS.

Organised by the district social welfare department, the discussion meeting was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Madaripur Md Mustafa. Deputy Director, Social Welfare Department Saifuddin Ahmed presented a paper on the significance of observance of the Elderly Day. Among others, Md. Jalal Uddin, Md Nazrul Islam, A K M Nurunnabi and Md Shamsul Huq took part in the discussion.

Problems grip pry schools

BANDARBAN, Oct 8: Mismanagement and lack of teachers and reading materials in primary schools have brought the government's primary education programme in the hill district to its knees, reports UNB.

Some 253 posts of headmaster and assistant teacher and 10 of thana education officer and assistant thana education officer have long been lying vacant. They said there are 33 primary schools which are being run only with one teacher while 106 with two, 41 with three and 39 with four teachers. Some 23,432 students are now studying in the schools. Eight primary schools in Ruina thana remained closed since 1980 for lack of teachers. There have been allegations that the authorities concerned had appointed eight teachers in 1980-1981 who could not even pass SSC examination.

Revenue earnings up

COMILLA, Oct 8: The Customs and Excise Department earned Taka 475.20 crore as duty tax and VAT on various items in three districts under Comilla region in the 1998-1999 fiscal year, reports BSS.

The three districts are Chandpur, Brahmanbaria and Comilla. According to an official source, in the current fiscal year the target has been fixed at Taka 559.54 crore in Comilla region. Meanwhile more than Taka 138.46 crore have been earned by the Customs and Excise department as duty tax and VAT in the three districts.

Workshop

COMILLA, Oct 8: A day long workshop on Narcotics legislation was held on September 30 at Comilla District Council office, reports BSS.

Department of Narcotics Control and United Nations International Drug Control Programme jointly organised the workshop. Director General of Narcotics Department Modabbir Hossain Chowdhury was the chief guest in the workshop. District Judge Nazmunahar Sultana, Commandar 17 Rifle Battalion Lt. Col Khorshed Alam and Police Super Abu Musa Md Fakhrul Islam Khan were the special guests. Deputy Commissioner Dr Chowdhury Golam Maola presided over the workshop. Director of Narcotics Department, Operation, Abdul Hoque Chowdhury, Additional Director Shaheer Rahman, Project Director of United Nations Programme Khondokar Abdul Hafiz spoke, among others, on the occasion.

Outbreak of cattle disease

NOAKHALL, Oct 8: An outbreak of cattle disease so far claimed 200 cattle here in this season, reports UNB.

According to district livestock office, 'khura' disease broke out in various parts of the district. The main cause behind outbreak of the disease is mainly due to unawareness of the farmers to vaccinate their cattle in due time, officials said. Farmers, however, alleged that 13 vaccination centres in Sudharam, Chakthil, Senbagh, Begumganj, Companiganj and Hatia thanas remained closed almost round the year. Moreover, the poor and marginal farmers could not afford the treatment cost as the physicians charge excessive amount for medicines, he added.

Agri-loan for farmers

COMILLA, Oct 8: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) through its 33 branches disbursed Taka 3.45 crore as agriculture loan among the farmers during July and August of the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

A BKB source said, the bank has a target to disburse Taka 48.50 crore as agriculture loan this year. During the last two months the BKB realised outstanding loan amounting to Taka 4.16 crore from the borrowers.

Training on pest management

TANGAIL, Oct 8: A 16-day training course on integrated pest management sponsored by the Compartmental Pilot Project (CPP) concluded here last week, reports BSS.

A total of 150 farmers from different parts of the districts took part in the training. Hashmatullah Fakir, an agronomist of the CPP, conducted the training. The participants were imparted training on a new method evolved by the CPP for controlling pest and insects in order to protect the crops.

Nine killed in separate road mishaps in dists

By Staff Correspondent

At least nine people were killed and 96 injured in separate road accidents in six districts recently.

Our Faridpur correspondent says: Four persons were killed and 31 injured in two separate road accidents in two thanas recently.

Three rickshaw van passengers, including a baby, were killed on Faridpur-Barisal highway near Sadar under Bhangra thana when a speeding truck hit the rickshaw van from behind.

The victims were identified as Labani, 4, her mother Rokeya Begum, 45, and the van puller Karam Ali, 35. The baby died on the spot.

In another incident, a young man was killed and 31 were injured as a Kustia-bound passenger bus coming from Dhaka skidded into a roadside ditch at Badarpur under Sadar thana on Faridpur-Khulna highway. Identity of the young man could not be known. Of the injured, conditions of 17 were critical, 14 others were given first aid.

Our Magura correspondent adds: Two people were killed and 15 others injured in a road accident in the district recently.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred in front of Magura Sadar Hospital when a Khulna-bound passenger coach

and a truck collided.

Two coach passengers died on the spot. Identity of them could not be known. Injured persons were admitted to hospital.

Police seized both the vehicles. But the drivers managed to escape the scene.

UNB reports: In Jamalpur a minibus driver was killed and 10 people were injured in an accident on Jamalpur-Myensingh road at Haripur Tuesday.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place when a Jamalpur-bound minibus fell into a roadside ditch on the outskirts of the town.

Minibus driver Babu, 32, died on the spot.

The injured were admitted to Jamalpur Sadar Hospital. They were identified as Pari, 35, Swappa, 20, Lovely, 10, Mozammel, 40, Anis, 15, Parvez, 20, Joyal, 14, Maruf, 18, and Jafar Ali.

In Jessore, a young man was killed and three other people were injured in an accident at Kuchamora on Navaren-Satkhira highway recently.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place when a Satkhira-bound bus rammed into a rickshaw coming from the opposite direction. The dead was identified as Shaiful Islam, 25, a rickshaw-puller, hailed from Kalaroa thana in

Satkhira district. Police recovered the body and sent it to Jessore General Hospital morgue for autopsy. The injured people were rushed to Navaron Health Complex.

In Manikganj, a bicyclist was killed and 30 people were injured when a Khulna-bound bus fell into a roadside ditch after hitting the bicycle at Bathulee on Dhaka-Aricha highway on October 1, said the agency.

The deceased was identified as Kallimuddin of Dhankora village in Sadar thana of Manikganj district.

The body was sent to Manikganj Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Ten of the injured were rushed to Sadar hospital and 15 to Dhamrai Gansosathya Kendra and various clinics in Dhaka.

In Chandpur, seven people were injured in an accident at Laxmipur village in Sadar thana recently.

Witnesses said the accident took place when a truck loaded with 10 metric tons of rice fell into a roadside ditch while its driver was giving passage to a bicyclist.

The injured were identified as Jalal, 35, Khokan, 28, Maqbul, 35, Tariqullah, 38, Anir Hossain, 35, Deen Islam, 30 and Misir Ali, 35 were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

Child Rights Week observed

Child Rights Week was observed in various districts from September 29 to October 5 in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

In Madaripur, the programmes of the week concluded on October 5.

The district administration, Shishu Academy, Madaripur unit, civil surgeon office, information office and various NGOs took up elaborate programmes to mark the week.

The programmes, included children rally, painting competition and discussion meeting.

Shishu Academy, Madaripur unit arranged a children rally and painting competition in the academy premises on October 2.

A total of 30 children participated in the competition.

In Gazipur, a discussion and cultural function was held at Tongi Collegiate High School on Monday in observance of week.

The programme was jointly organised by Shishu Adhikar Forum of Bangladesh and Manobadhakar Sangbadik Forum, Gazipur district unit.

The discussion was presided over by Akash Mohanmad Akkas, Principal, Tongi Collegiate School.

Among others, JH Mollah, Principal of Bhawal Ideal Academy, Ataur Rahman, Director of Bhawal Shishu Kishor Mela, Saiful Islam Razu, Principal, Mouchak ABC Kindergarten and School and Principal Rafiqul Islam discussed various aspects of child rights.

The programmes of Kishoregani Women and Children Affairs Department included distribution of food among the poor children, children rally, art competition and recitation of poems by the children.

A cultural programme and discussion meeting was held at local shilpakala academy.

Presided over by a student of class four, the meeting was conducted by the additional deputy commissioner.

The speakers discussed the rights of children.

High officials and the elite attended the meeting.

In Brahmanbaria, the

week-long programme was inaugurated on September 28 by Deputy Commissioner Lutfar Rahman in a simple function.

The programme included children rally, discussion, seminar, painting and recitation by the children.

In Satkhira, a discussion meeting organised by Satkhira Shishu Academy on the children's right was held on Tuesday at Satkhira sadar thana auditorium.

Deputy Commissioner Saiful Alam attended the discussion as the chief guest.

Presided over the Thana Nirbahi Officer Nimal Chand Biswas, the meeting was addressed, among others, by additional Deputy Commissioner (General) AB Mohammad Ali, District Education Officer Khorshed Alam Chowdhury, District Children Affairs Officer Afana Ferdous and Editor of the Satkhira Chitra Prof. Anisur Rahman.

The meeting was followed by a cultural function participated by children.



Priority on child rights: A street drama was arranged jointly by the Department of Information and UNICEF in Sylhet town recently in observance of Child Rights Week and Meena Day. Photo shows a scene from the drama. — Star photo by Iqbal Siddiquee

Shortage of pry teachers in Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent JAMALPUR, Oct 8: Primary education in Sarishabari thana is being hampered greatly because of shortage of teachers.

Many schools do not have adequate number of teachers. At least 33 schools have only three teachers each. Matujan, Shisura, Baghmara, Ezarapara and Kubilbari government primary schools have only two teachers each.

Besides, a total of eight posts of head masters and 17 assistant teachers have been lying vacant.

According to district primary education office sources, there are 185 primary schools in the thana. Of them, 85 are government schools. Some 48,700 children attend schools.

Bid to rape girl: 4 held

From Our Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Oct 8: Four men were caught red-handed while making advances to a teenage girl in a residential hotel in Sadarghat area under Double Mooring thana on October 4.

A man from Chhagalnaya thana of Feni district along with his 13-year-old girl rented a room in Hotel Sekander in the area. Four neighbours of the room offered the man drug mixed drinks and made him unconscious.

Taking advantage, the four tried to rape the girl. When the girl raised hue and cry, other boarders of the hotel gathered and caught the miscreants.

They were later handed over to police. The arrested were Afer, Jewel, Bikram Chandra Debanath and hotel staff Manan.

Boy confesses his guilt

From A Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 8: A schoolboy appeared before a court in Chowdhali thana recently and admitted he was involved with a gang of robbers.

Rezaul Karim, who reads in class ten in a local school, also said that he had possessed the revolver police recovered from his house.

Police, acting on a tip-off, raided the house of Abdur Razak, father of the boy, of village Khashkawlia under the thana and recovered a revolver from the house on 28 September 99. Police arrested Rezaul Karim's mother for illegal possession of firearm.

The boy told magistrate his mother was innocent. He said the revolver was used in a number of robberies.



The River Naboganga in Magura district which becomes dry in the dry season is now in its full spate. Boatmen who remain almost idle in the dry season have become active again ferrying people from one bank to the other one. This picture was taken recently from Parnanduali area in the sadar thana. — Star photo

Rajshahi DIARY

From Our Correspondent

Fulkuri founding anniversary

RAJSHAHI, Oct 8: The month-long silver jubilee festival of Fulkuri Asar, a children's organisation, is now going on here with full enthusiasm.

On the occasion children brought out a colourful procession on September 28 afternoon. About 300 children paraded the main thoroughfares of the city with placards, festoons and national flags.

Rajshahi city unit president of Fulkuri Asar and Rajshahi University Syndicate member Prof. Shah Habibur Rahman, director of its city unit, Shaikh Masudur Rahman (Raj), assistant director Tojammal Haque, former director Shaheer Rahman, among others, led the procession.

Contraband worth Tk 25 lakh seized

BDR personnel of 36 Battalion seized smuggled goods worth Taka 25 lakh and arrested five persons in this connection in three separate drives recently.

On secret information, BDR personnel conducted drives to Matherpur in Godagari thana, Yusupur in Charghat thana and Alaipur in Bagha thana. The contraband included 2,000 pieces of Indian saree, 1,500 kilogram of onion, 4,500 kilogram of sugar, 6,000 pieces of egg and other items. The contraband were deposited to the local Customs office and the arrested persons were handed over to police.

Afforestation programme

Ward Number 4 of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) has undertaken a tree plantation programme recently.

Rajshahi District and Sessions Judge Sohrab Hossain inaugurated the programme by planting a sapling in Rajshahi court premises on Thursday. Elite of the area including Ward Commissioner Sajjad Hossain were present. A total of 3,000 saplings will be planted during the programme.

Businessman robbed

A group of youths snatched away Taka 47,000 from a cigarette trader at Panchabati Shekherchak area in the city on Thursday.

Mahtabuddin of Raninagar, was going to Shaheb Bazaar suddenly the snatchers intercepted him on his way and robbed him off at gun point and fled away. Boalia Police also arrested eight persons including three absconding accuseds in separate drives on Thursday.

Terrorist gets seven-yr RI

An absconding terrorist named Shamim Ahmed alias Shamim was sentenced to seven years' Rigorous Imprisonment (RI).

Rajshahi Additional District and Sessions Judge S M Helaluddin awarded the punishment last Wednesday. According to the case history, Nayek Shamsul Alam of Rajpara caught Shamim red-handed with a weapon from the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) main road on April 26. A case was filed in this connection and sub-inspector Sirajul Islam submitted chargesheet after investigation.

Phensidyl smuggler awarded 2-yr RI

One phensidyl smuggler was awarded two years' Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) and a fine of Taka 200.

In case of failing to pay the fine, he will have to undergo additional one month's RI. Rajshahi Additional District and Sessions Judge Begum Nurunnahar announced the verdict on Thursday. According to the history of the case, Motihar Police, while on a patrol duty on Jan 15 last, intercepted the smuggler named Abul Kalam at Katakhal Bazaar on suspicion and recovered 10 bottles of phensidyl smuggled from India from his possession.

Acute food crisis in Rangpur villages

RANGPUR, Oct 8: Despite distribution of foodgrains among limited number of destitutes through VGF programme, an acute food crisis is prevailing in the rural areas, reports UNB.

The situation has been aggravated due to the recent flood and absence of employment opportunity for the poor agricultural labourers.

Although the price of essentials is almost static, the low-income group lost the buying power as they have no source of income during the current lean period.

People affected by river erosion are the worst sufferers. They are thronging to the urban areas every day in search of work but return disappointed. Some of them, however, manage to pull rickshaws in the town.

Chairman of Luxmity union parishad in Gangachhara thana Fazlur Rahman said, more than 8,000 people of his union have been rendered destitute, mostly by erosion of the River Teesta.

The situation in shoal areas is pitiable where many people are passing their days in near starvation. Only 500 VGF cards have been given for distribution among the poor, which are too inadequate, said Rahman.

Similar situation is prevailing in the rural areas of Sadar, Kaunia, Pirgachha, Mithapukur, Pirganj, Badarganj and Taraganj thana.

The poverty stricken people have urged the government to allot more VGF cards and start Test Relief Programme to help them overcome the situation until the harvest of Aman crop.

Pests playing havoc with Aman fields

NATORE, Oct 8: Massive pest attack, triggered by late monsoon rain, looks certain to take its toll on Aman output in the greater Rajshahi district, including Natore, reports UNB.

Despite frequent flash floods and price hike of fertilisers, the growers of Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Naogaon and Natore districts were expecting a bumper output of transplanted Aman.

Even their plants were growing fairly well until the month of September when flash flood caused by incessant rain raged through their croplands.

Local Met Office recorded 299 mm of rainfall during the month of September. The rain-water still remained stagnant in paddy fields. Beside, there was no adequate sunshine for the last one month that caused the roots and stems of paddy plants to rot.

Rustom Ali, crop production expert of Natore Department of Agriculture Extension, said the long absence of sunshine helped the harmful bacteria, fungi and some other microscopic organisms to play havoc on croplands.

He said the pest, widely known as Maza Poka breeds rapidly during the absence of sunshine, damaging the stems

of paddy plants. DAE officials said the stem rotting disease has broken out in an epidemic form in Shingra, Gurudaspur and Sadar thanas of Natore district and many parts of the region.

They said Swarna, a high yielding variety of Aman, is highly vulnerable to the disease. Some 50 per cent of the land, which was brought under Swarna Cultivation, has been affected by the stem rotting disease.

Woman stabbed to death by ex-husband

From Our Correspondent JHENIDAH, Oct 8: A woman was stabbed to death by her ex-husband at village Barasimla under Kaliganj thana recently.

The victim was identified as Rafeza Khatun, 25.

Witnesses said Altaf Hossain, the ex-husband, stabbed the woman in her abdomen following exchange of hot talks.

Family sources said Altaf wanted to marry Rafeza again. But the woman refused him.

Events of districts in picture



Farewell: Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor Prof Sayedur Rahman Khan addressing at a farewell function arranged on the occasion of the retirement of Prof A B M Hossain, a senior teacher of the Islamic History and Culture Department. — Star photo



Prof A M Faruk of the Horticulture Department of Bangladesh Agricultural University speaking as the chief guest at a training programme for farmers held at Natore Horticulture Office. A total of 450 male and female trainees took part there. — Star photo



Artistes rendering Tagore songs at a function arranged recently in Sylhet by Jatiyo Rabindra Sangeet Sammilan Parisad. — Star photo