

News snaps

VGD programme progressing

RANGPUR, Oct 31: The Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme is in full swing according to district relief office sources, reports BSS.

Under the programme, a total of 9,66,000 kg wheat has been allotted for two months of October and November this year. At least 16,100 VGD card holder distressed women and children will be benefited in Rangpur district. Every card holder will get 30 kg wheat per month.

Contraband seized

FENI, Oct 31: Bangladesh Rifles, in separate drives, seized contraband worth Tk 2.24 crore from different parts of the district in last nine months till September, reports UNB.

Eight alleged smugglers were also arrested and five trucks seized during the period. The arrested were Mohammad Ali, Shaifq, Dulal, Omal, Selim, Shahidullah, Abdul Alim and Nasir. BDR sources said they raided the areas, including Modhnagar, Champaknagar, Shuovpur, Bollavpur, Mondia, Mirzanagar, Boxmahmud, Fotehnur, Dewanganj, Dharmapur and Lalpur and recovered the goods. The recovered contraband included saree, sugar, timber, powder milk, narcotics, horlicks and cosmetics.

Afforestation gains popularity

NETROKONA, Oct 31: Following hectic campaign by the government and NGOs, tree plantation has gained popularity, reports UNB.

According to the local forest department the number of private nurseries has increased in all the 10 thanas during the last five years to meet the growing demand for saplings. Some 200 private nurseries have been set up in the district where 1500 skilled and unskilled workers are engaged in earning their bread. People have collected various fruit bearing, timber and flower saplings from these nurseries. Plantation of trees will help earn livelihood of the people and also help maintain an ecological balance in the country. Many youths are found collecting saplings of mango, jack-fruit, litchi, grapes, teak, rose, night queen and marigold. Unemployed youths of Sadar, Kendua, Atpara, Barhatta, Mohanganj and Durgapur thanas are coming forward to set up nurseries.

Cattle lifting incidents up

KISHOREGANJ, Oct 31: Increased incidents of cattle lifting in villages under Pakundia, Hossainpur and Katadi thanas has created panic among the poor farmers, reports UNB.

The poverty stricken farmers alleged that they were passing the nights in anxiety as organised gangs lifting cattle almost every night. Some poor farmers who had one or two cattle are keeping them inside the dwelling houses. They said they are afraid of filing case against the cattle lifters as influential quarters are patronising the thieves. They urged the authority to take immediate measures against cattle lifting and thus save the poor farmers.

Uplift of fisheries sector sought

KHULNA, Oct 31: Fisheries and Livestock Minister A S M Abdur Rob laid emphasis on the overall development of the fisheries and livestock sector and said a dynamic sector can help eradicate poverty, create employment and earn foreign exchange, reports BSS.

He was addressing divisional, district and thana level fisheries and livestock officers of Khulna division in local Circuit House here. Rob said despite resource constraints, there is an enormous opportunity of exploring entrepreneurship in the country. He also sought cooperation of the people in this regard.

Drug addicts increasing

KISHOREGANJ, Oct 31: The number of drug addicts in the district town and its adjoining areas has shown alarming rise in the recent past creating social problems for the peace loving people, reports UNB.

Unemployed youths, transport workers and a section of school and college dropouts have been getting addicted to drugs causing concern among the guardians. Local elite said the large-scale drug abuse coupled with gambling and other anti-social activities at the thana headquarters and in different huts and bazaars have been increasingly posing threats to building a healthy society. Smuggling of contraband drug items like *phensedyl* has also increased. As a result, the youths are easily getting the India-made syrup at hotels, tea stalls and pharmacies.

Tubewells installation programme

JHENIDAH, Oct 31: The Department of Public Health Engineering has taken up a plan to install seven deep tubewells at different schools in Shaiklupa thana to ensure safe drinking among the students, reports UNB.

Under the School Sanitation Programme, the department with financial and technical assistance of UNICEF has already completed 70 per cent work on the project and the rest will be completed by next month, officials said. After completion of the project, some 2,000 students of this thana will get pure drinking water facility.

Disaster reduction decade observed

FARIDPUR, Oct 31: International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) a global programme, was observed here on Wednesday in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

A colourful rally was brought out in the morning, which paraded the main streets of the town. A discussion meeting was also held in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner. The keynote paper on "Science and Technology for Disaster Prevention, saves Lives and Secures Assets" was presented by Prof Md Shahjahan, Principal of Government Sarada Sundary Mahila College.

Efforts on for economic uplift

KACHUA (Chandpur), Oct 31: State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir has said the present government under the able leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is working relentlessly for the economic development of the country, reports BSS.

The state minister was speaking as the chief guest at a recently. Leaders of local Awami League and its front organisations spoke on the occasion. Referring to the Peace Accord he said peace has been restored in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area following signing of the accord between the government and the former tribal insurgents.

Road development scheme

RANGPUR, Oct 31: The Roads and Highways Department has been implementing schemes for the development of 10 roads and two bridges at a cost of Taka three crore seventy lakh in the current fiscal year, according to official sources, reports BSS.

The schemes are expected to be completed by the end of June next year.

Three absconders arrested

JHENIDAH, Oct 31: Three absconding criminals were arrested from different areas in Moheshpur thana on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The arrested were identified as Moshiar, 22, of village Kadirkol and Sultan Sheik, 30, of village Chachra of Moheshpur thana and Siddique alias Feroq of village Jalalpur in Kotchandpur thana.

Misdeeds of sub-registry officials

SHARIATPUR, Oct 31: The government is being deprived of huge amount of land revenue every year due to alleged irregularities by a section of employees of the sub-registrar offices, reports UNB.

It is alleged that a section of sub-registrars and their employees, in connivance with some deed writers, fix the value of property at less than the actual market prices. Half of the amount is deducted from the actual market price and a big percentage of that amount is taken as bribe by some corrupt officials and deed writers who use counterfeit stamps for their misdeeds. Moreover, the officials realise excess fees in the name of registration of property cheating the helpless people. Shortage of employees in the sub-registrar offices is also causing various difficulties to the sellers and buyers of lands, the affected people alleged. The District Registrar, however, refuted the allegation and said that functions of most of the sub-registrar offices have been going on smoothly as per government rules and regulations.

Development of road progressing

MANIKGANJ, Oct 31: The development of Sauria-Pakundia Road at a cost of Taka 3.45 crore under 2nd Rural Road and Market Development and Maintenance Project is progressing satisfactorily, reports BSS.

Under the project a total of 10.5 kilometre-road is being developed with earth filling and carpeting. The Local Government Engineering Department is implementing the project which is expected to be completed by March next year. The communication system of the area will be much developed after completion of the project.

12 killed in separate incidents in dists

A total of 12 persons were killed in separate incidents recently in various districts, report agencies.

Four unnatural deaths were reported in two thanas of Feni district on Tuesday.

Police and witnesses said Dina Akter, 27, of Madhual village under sadar thana was allegedly beaten to death by her husband Abu Mia for dowry. She was mother of four children.

Alek Mia, 50, drowned in a pond near Nazir Road of the town in the afternoon on the same day.

Hospital sources said an unidentified man aged about 65 succumbed to his injuries at Feni Sadar Hospital. Some people took him to the hospital with severe injuries and fled leaving him behind.

Another report adds: Sultan Mian, 42, of Haripur village in Chhaganaiya thana, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison because of abject poverty.

A newly married girl was killed by her husband in village Binodpur under Magma Sadar thana on Wednesday morning.

Anjana Khatun, 16, had eloped with her lover Mizanur Rahman two months ago and married him without the consent of her parents.

Her father Akbar Ali filed a case with Mohammadpur against Mizanur Rahman.

On Wednesday morning, Mizan and Anjana in a baby taxi started for Mohammadpur thana to surrender. On way, the cruel husband stabbed the young wife in her chest with a sharp knife killing her on the spot.

Residents of the area caught hold of Mizan with the help of baby taxi driver and handed him over to the police.

The motive of the killing was not immediately known. A man was killed by his ri-

vals at Auzati village in Ishwarganj thana of Mymensingh district on Tuesday following failure of a village arbitration.

The dead was identified as Golam Mostafa, 35, of the same village.

Villagers said a dispute has been prevailing between the families of Abdul Haq and Mostafa over a love affair between Haq's niece Hafeza and Mostafa's younger brother Zahidul Islam.

On the day of incident, an arbitration to resolve the dispute between the two families was called. But it ended without any settlement.

Witnesses said followers of Abdul Haque swooped on Mostafa and mercilessly stabbed him with sharp weapon on way to home. He died on the spot.

A little boy was crushed under the wheels of a truck at Chandmari area on link-road near Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Narayanganj district on Thursday.

Police said Ershad, 8, was run over by the Narayanganj-bound truck in front of Chandmari Mazar at about 11 am.

The body was sent to Narayanganj General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police arrested truck driver Khorshed Alam, 28, along with the vehicle.

A young housewife was strangled to death allegedly by her husband at Balagaon area in Rupganj thana of Narayanganj district on Wednesday.

The victim was identified as Taslima Begum, 24, a garment worker.

Police said Jalal, 32, of Kutuba village in same thana, who got married Taslima as second wife, killed her following a family feud.

The body was sent to Narayanganj General Hospital

morgue for autopsy.

An old man was killed by his rivals at village Ujalpur in Sadar thana of Meherpur district over a trifle matter on Wednesday.

The man was identified as Amir Ali, 55, of Baganpara.

Police said Halu and Palu, two brothers of Ujalpur, swooped on Amir Ali with sharp weapons while he was lodging complaint with them about damaging his paddy field by their goats.

Ali received serious injuries and died on way to Kushtia General Hospital.

Police arrested Palu while Halu was absconding.

A school teacher was killed and his colleague suffered severe injuries when a speeding truck hit their motorbike on Balladangi-Lahiri road in Balladangi thana of Thakurgaon district on Tuesday.

The dead was identified as Taidur Rahman and injured Mofizur Rahman.

Police said the truck hit the motorbike near Zaunia Bridge while they were going to school. Taidur died on the spot.

Mofizur Rahman was admitted to Balladanga Thana Health Complex in a critical condition.

Body of a unidentified young man was recovered from a sugarcane field in Meherchandi area of Rajshahi city on Tuesday.

Local people and police suspect that unknown assailants drowned him in a pond and left the body in the field.

A day labourer allegedly committed suicide by taking insecticide in the town's Kalabagan area of Jhalakati district on Thursday.

Family sources said Yusuf Ali Khan, 45, father of three and resident of Mirzapur village in Sadar thana, took his own life due to family feud.



Total Literacy Movement programme is now progressing fast in Chandpur. Photo shows illiterate women of South Maishadi union attending classes while their teachers are supervising the daily routine.

Problems grip Manikganj Sadar Hospital

MANIKGANJ, Oct 31: Various problems have gripped the sadar hospital depriving the people from proper medicare facility, reports UNB.

During his visit on Thursday, Health Minister Salahuddin Yusuf expressed dissatisfaction over mismanagement, unhygienic environment and menace of middlemen in the hospital.

Locals said the hospital is short of manpower, equipment and medicine. Negligence to duties by physicians and nurses, and shortage of medical representatives and middlemen added further sufferings to the patients.

The hospital, upgraded into a 100-bed from 50-bed in July

last year, has no blood bank and improved treatment facility.

The situation in the hospital worsened further as a section of doctors used to charge the patients for giving prescriptions in hospital violation of the government rules.

The patients have been deprived of treatment facility as half of the physicians out of 12 in the hospital remain always absent from their duties. They are more interested in doing practice in clinics rather attending duties in hospital, alleged patients.

According to a competent source, the superintendent of the hospital or the civil surgeon does not pay heed to the problems.

Unhygienic condition at various wards, supplying of low standard food to the patients and misbehaviour by the nurses are regular phenomena in the hospital.

Presence of middlemen is another hazard in getting treatment in hospital. They influence the patients to go to various clinics for treatment or having various tests. Most of the clinics are devoid of minimum standard.

It was alleged that although necessary medicines were supplied from the central medical store, the authorities did not give those to the patients. The medicines are seen selling from different medicine stores in the town.

Maid raped, murdered

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 31: A 14-year-old maid was allegedly murdered following rape by her employer at Syagobida here Saturday night.

Locals believe that the alleged killer of Hashi Khatun was trying to hush up the matter by trying to show it as a case of suicide.

The employer, Saidul Islam, a staff of the local Public Works Department (PWD), was allegedly trying to bribe the victim's father and threatening local newsmen with dire consequences of reporting against him.

However, the employer went into hiding. A case was filed in this connection. No one was arrested till filing of this report.

Obituary

By Staff Correspondent

Former factory manager of Chittagong Al-Mostafa Industries Ltd MA Halim Chowdhury died of heart attack on Wednesday at Gohira under Raozan thana in Chittagong. He was 56.

Chowdhury, who was also the founding governing body president of Daloinagar High School at Gohira, left behind his mother, wife, son, daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Bumper output of Aman in Netrakona expected

NETRAKONA, Oct 31: Farmers in Netrakona district have regained spirits with the encouraging signs of a bumper Aman output this season, reports UNB.

Agriculture officials said over 1.2 lakh hectares of land in 10 thanas here have been brought under transplanted Aman this year against the target of 1,08,250 hectares.

They said the farmers, who could not fare well in jute and Aus harvests this year, are now registering their enthusiasm seeing a good prospect of Aman output, thanks to timely rainfall.

Aman harvesting is likely to begin by the second week of November.

Another report from Thakurgaon adds: Farmers of Thakurgaon district are also in an upbeat mood expecting a good harvest although their crop lands came under massive pest-attack.

Officials said HYV and local varieties of paddy on about 21,856 hectares of land here were damaged by pest-attack and flooding.

Even then two lakh mts of paddy are expected from 1.10 lakh hectares of land here this season.

Meanwhile, new paddy has started coming to the market



His earning, my death: A bustling industry in Kanchpur, under Narayanganj district pours its toxic wastes directly into the adjacent low lying land, pond and even public places. Almost none of the hundreds of industries in the area has the slightest respect for the environment and the villages around them. The entire area and the Sitalakhya river nearby are testimonies of an environmental nightmare. The law is there, so are there expensive government departments to enforce them to stop the culprits run their business at the cost of our life. But is there anyone up there who cares?

— Photo by Sheikh Enamul Haq. Text by Morshed Ali Khan

Gaibandha DIARY

Rains affect Aman crops

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Oct 31: Aman crops on a vast tract of land in five unions under Shaghata thana have been affected following incessant rains in recent days, casting an adverse impact on the expected production.

The affected areas are Ghuridaha, Haldia, Kamalerpara, Jumbarbari and Shaghata unions. Moreover, floods during the plantation period also took a heavy toll on farmers.

Erosion renders 100 families homeless

Erosion by the River Teesta have recently rendered nearly one hundred families homeless at Chandipur union under Sunderganj thana.

Besides, arable lands also have been devoured by the river. The flood control embankment along the river, constructed by the Water Development Board is under threat of erosion. The homeless people have taken shelter on embankment and high lands.

Pipe gun recovered

A pipe gun, bullets and crackers were recovered recently from different areas of Gobindaganj thana.

Police, in separate drives, recovered one country made pipe gun, two toy pistols, three bullets and three crackers. Three people were also arrested during the drives. They were identified as Moinul Islam, 20, Azizur Rahman, 35 and Saiful Alam, 18. Separate cases were lodged.

Mother, son electrocuted

Son and mother were electrocuted when they came in contact with high voltage live electric wire at village Balarampur under Palashbari thana recently.

The victims were identified as Saiful, 12, and Sada Rani. Villagers said Saiful was electrocuted when he came in contact with a live wire, which fell from pole and remained on ground. When his mother, Sada Rani, found her son lying on the ground and touched him, she also came in contact with the wire. She died on the spot.

Rectified spirit recovered

Huge quantity of rectified spirit was recovered from a shop at Puratan Bazaar in the town recently.

Acting on tip-off, police raided the shop and recovered 129 bottles of rectified spirit. Two persons also arrested in this connection. They were identified as Minto Mia, owner of the shop, and his younger brother Mukul. A case was filed with Gaibandha thana.

12 uplift projects implemented

Gaibandha Zila Parishad has implemented 12 uplift projects spending Taka 3 lakh five thousand in the current fiscal year.

The projects included renovation of bungalow and union parishad buildings and constructions of roads and culverts.

Remarks criticised

RANGMATI, Oct 31: Local newsmen at a meeting here on Thursday criticised CHT Regional Council member Ruyayan Dewan for his alleged remarks against journalists, involving them in forest destruction, reports UNB.

Describing his comments as defamatory and humiliating, the newsmen demanded action against Dewan.

The meeting was held with local press club president A K M Maksud in the chair.

Science bldg of Belgachi Girls' High School opens

By Staff Correspondent

A newly constructed one-storey Science building of Belgachi Girls' High School in Khanganj union of Rajbari sadar thana was opened recently by Deputy Commissioner (DC) M Hanif Uddin Sarkar.

The four-lakh taka project, financed under an allocation from the Wage Earners Fund of the Labour and Manpower Ministry, was completed in the month of August adding another milestone in steady infrastructure and academic progress, made by the area's lone girls' institution since its inception in 1995 as a junior girls' school under local initiatives.

Earlier in 1997, the school got a major boost with a special French Government donation of 12,68,000 taka which was utilised to construct the school's main two-storied building having five class rooms and two teacher and of-

rice chairs.

Chaired by Golam Tahaboor, president of the school managing committee, the opening function was addressed by Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) of Rajbari Alauddin Fakir, district education officer Ataur Rahman, chairman of local union council Golam Kibria Bablu, former chairman Abdul Malek Pramanik and headmaster of the school Abdul Aziz.

The DC lauded the constructive role of local people in turning the new school as a model institution and assured all possible cooperation of the local administration for its continued advancement.

Tahaboor said if needed the school will join in the district administration's new drive for spread of informal education and allow its premises and facilities to make the union free from illiteracy in near future.



Hanif Uddin Sarkar, Deputy Commissioner of Rajbari speaking recently at the opening ceremony of a new building of Belgachi Girls' High School in Rajbari district.

Development work in 3 dists progressing

Work on various development projects is in full swing in three districts, reports BSS.

Work on 721 development projects is in full swing in eight thanas and two pourasabhas of Rangpur district, according to official sources.

A total of 994 tonnes of wheat has been allotted for implementation of the projects in the current dry season.

District Relief and Disaster Management Department has been implementing the projects under Test Relief Programme of the government.

The projects included repair and renovation of different roads and roads-cum-embankments and earthwork in different educational and religious institutions.

The eight thanas are Rangpur, Mithapukur, Kaunia, Pirganj, Badarganj, Pirgachha, Taraganj, Gangachhara, Rangpur pourasabha and Haragacha pourasabha.

Local Government and Engineering Directorate (LGED) has taken up four development projects in Kishoreganj district in the 1999-2000 financial year.

According to an official source, the government has sanctioned Taka 18,02,000 for implementation of the projects.

The projects included con-

struction of culverts at a low cost.

The work order of the projects has already been given.

The Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) under its Rural Infrastructure Development Programme has taken up two schemes in two thanas of Chuadanga, one at Chuadanga Sadar thana and another at Damurhuda thana.

The schemes will be implemented in the current season at a total cost of Taka 89,47,834.

Rice carrying truck hijacked in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Oct 31: A truck loaded with rice was hijacked from Jhenidah-Jessore highway recently, police sources said.

A gang of miscreants hijacked the truck, which was carrying 10 metric tons of rice, from Raghunathpur area. The gang intercepted the vehicle by putting up barricades on the road and overpowered the driver at gun point.

A case was lodged with police. But no one was arrested.



Some boys at College Para in Magura town fishing smaller species of fish in a paddy field which was submerged by rain waters in recent time.

— Star photo