

News snaps



Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor Prof Abdul Mannan presenting the crest of Chittagong University to Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities Prof Michael Gibbons after a recent meeting of the association in London. — Star photo

Katyani puja celebrated

MAGURA, Nov 20: Five-day long *Katyani Puja*, a religious festival of the Hindu community, was celebrated here in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

Deputy Inspector General of Police of Khulna Range Lutful Kabir, during his stay in the town, visited some *Puja Mandaps*. Police Super Khan Sayeed Hassan accompanied him.

42,400 VGF cards allocated

RANGPUR, Nov 20: The government has allocated 42,400 VGF cards for the distressed people in eight thanas and one of Haragachha Municipality Pourasabha, in the district, reports BSS.

District relief officer Qader Uddin Mannan said 500 distressed people in each of the 83 units in eight thanas and 900 in Haragachha municipality area will get 10 KG of rice per head for three months effective from September.

Boy electrocuted

BARISAL, Nov 20: A boy was electrocuted recently when he was flying kite on the roof of a mosque building in New Circular Road area here, reports BSS.

According to police, Roni, 4, climbed on the roof of the Gazibari Mosque and tried to catch the kite hanging with an electric wire. He was electrocuted there. An unnatural death case was lodged with Kotwali thana police in this connection.

Banned pesticides flood markets

BAGERHAT, Nov 20: Substandard Indian pesticides are openly sold in the markets of all 9 thanas here, causing health hazards and hampering production, reports BSS.

Not only the licensed dealers, the grocers are also selling the banned Indian pesticides at lower prices. The contraband insecticides include Scan-50 powder, Naschet, Diaodrin Botaflor, Hifdan, Gama-57 Nayonol etc. An expert said the unabated use of such substandard pesticides would reduce fertility of the soil. Besides, it will destroy the fish resources and create ecological problem in the country.

130 projects implemented

KHULNA, Nov 20: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has recently implemented 130 projects at a cost of Taka 44 lakh in Dumuria thana in the district, reports BSS.

Of the projects, 58 were implemented in transport and communication sector, 22 in agriculture and irrigation sector, 28 in infrastructure sector and 25 in education sector. The projects were implemented under Annual Development Plan.

Timber seized

COX'S BAZAR, Nov 20: Timber worth about Taka four lakh was seized from Ramu area on Monday, reports BSS.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team, comprising forest department, district administration and police, raided the area and seized about 1000 cubic feet of stolen timbers from four depots. Officials said, an organised gang of timber lifters have long been involved in stealing valuable trees, including segun, teak and gamari from the reserve forests of Cox's Bazar. •

Certificates awarded

COMILLA, Nov 20: A certificate giving ceremony of Dustama Shishu Kalyan Foundation was held here in its premises last week, reports BSS.

The function was presided over by Chowdhury Golam Mawla, Deputy Commissioner of Comilla. A T M Shamsul Haque, Chairman of Public Administration Reforms Commission, distributed certificates among the participants. Twenty-nine participants attended the function.

744 mts of wheat allocated

HABIGANJ, Nov 20: District Relief and Rehabilitation Department under its Rural Infrastructure Maintenance Programme has allocated 744 metric tons of wheat for Habiganj district, reports BSS.

Officials said the wheat would be utilised for construction and renovation of rural roads, embankment, drain, mosques, madrasahs, temples and churches in Habiganj, Sayestaganj, Madhabpur and Nabiganj pourasavas, and sadar, Azmiranj, Bahubal, Baniachang, Chunuragh, Lakhai, Madhabpur and Nabiganj thanas.

Road dev work progressing

RAJBARI, Nov 20: Carpeting and other development works on six roads of the district were progressing in full swing, costing Tk 68 lakh, reports BSS.

Local Government Engineering Department is implementing the project with financial assistance from Islamic Development Bank. The roads are Pangsha-Goutampur road, Ramdiah-Kamardah road, Matipara-Baghpara road, Bishnupur-Chhotabhabla road, Pangsha-Kalukhali road and Kaliakandam-Kamarkhali road. LGED sources said 80 per cent works of the project have already been completed while the rest is likely to be completed by December next.

Tk 2.5 cr irrigation scheme

GOPALGANJ, Nov 20: Water Development Board has taken up an irrigation scheme, involving Tk 2.5 crore, under Tarail-Pachuria irrigation Project, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, a tender has been floated for the government-sponsored project, officials said. A vast track of croplands under the project would be saved from recurring floods upon its completion, helping the farmers to produce additional crops about one lakh ton from 500 hectares of land.

Life term for killer husband

HABIGANJ, Nov 20: A man has been condemned to life term imprisonment by a court here recently for killing his wife in 1992, reports BSS.

According to prosecution, Rajab Ali of Konargaon village in Chunuragh thana slaughtered his wife Khosbanu on Aug 13 in 1992 and filed a case with the local police saying that she was murdered by unknown assailants. All later confessed to police his crime. Additional District and Sessions Judge Miazuddin Miah after examining the records and witnesses pronounced the verdict on Nov 10.

Tk 1.60 LGED project

NARSINGDI, Nov 20: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has taken up a scheme under its Rural Infrastructure Maintenance Project to develop 25 kilometre of roads and to construct 42 bridges and culverts in the six thanas of the district in the fiscal 1999-2000, reports BSS.

The project would cost of Taka one crore sixty lakh. Official sources said the work will start in the first week of December '99 and is expected to be completed within March 2000.

National

Farmers find papaya farming profitable

As it is nutritious and profitable, cultivation of papaya is gaining popularity in districts, including Gopalganj and Netrakona, reports agency.

In Gopalganj, agriculture officials said the farmers became interested in cultivating papaya as it is more profitable than other crops.

Farmers said as papaya could be produced during the whole year with a minimum cost and the return is handsome, they brought more land under its cultivation.

An expert said, soil condition and climate of the district are suitable for farming of papaya. The prospect of its cultivation is bright.

The saplings are to be planted in the highland and there is a very little possibility of any harm to plants by storm.

or rain, besides pest attack is hardly noticed in the papaya field, said an agriculture official.

Some farmers said due to lack of knowledge of modern farming and improper application of fertiliser its desired production is being hampered.

An agriculturist said excessive use of fertilisers and application of spurious fertilisers might hamper production of papaya.

Growers cultivate papaya on high lands round the year. According to papaya growers, there is very little possibility of any harm to the plants by storm and rain. Besides, pests attack is hardly noticed in papaya fields.

Agriculture officials said mainly fluctuating temperature and excessive rains affect papaya farming. There is a bright prospect of papaya cultivation in drought-affected areas of the country, they opined.

Farmers said they are not aware of the proper use of fertilisers and the modern techniques of the cultivation.

Besides, indiscriminate use of spurious fertilisers is also affecting the farming to a great extent, agriculture officials said.

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Assistant Chief of Air Staff Air Commodore Rashid Ahmed giving away a trophy to the best all-round recruit AC-2 Shamim Ahmed at the recruit passing out parade at Recruits' Training School at the BAF Base Zahirul Haque in Chittagong on Thursday.

— ISPR photo

BNP's mass contact march in Pabna

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA, Nov 20: A 20-kilometre mass contact march was organised by the Pabna district unit of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on November 16.

BNP was demanding immediate resignation of the Awami League government.

Led by Rafiqul Islam Bakul, MP, president of the unit, the march started from Pabna town

and ended at Ataikula.

It was widely participated by the leaders and workers of BNP and its front organisations. A large number of BNP women activists also joined the march.

During the programme, the BNP leaders addressed eight wayside meetings near Mujahid Club, New Bus Terminal, Rajapur, Jalalpur, Pushpapara,

Madhupur, Kuchlamora and Gangarampur.

After reaching at Ataikula, the marchers held a big public meeting in the local madrasa ground. They called upon the people to join the movement actively and unitedly to fall the present government. They also urged people to compel them to announce the date of mid-term poll immediately.

Agriculture officials said over 1,000 hectares of land in the district would be brought under onion cultivation with an estimated output target of 10,000 tons in the current season. But the present seed crisis

may seriously hamper the output target.

They said onion would be cultivated on 910 hectares of land in Shibchar thana with a production target of 9,100 tons.

In the last season, onion cultivation and procurement of seed onions in Shibchar thana, reported for onion in greater Faridpur, was seriously hampered due to flood.

Farmers in Laxmiganj village in sadar thana said they would be able to cultivate only on 50 per cent of land this year as against the last year due to high price of seeds.

They urged the concerned authorities to provide the growers with seed onions and thus boost its production.



Rafiqul Islam Bakul MP, President of Pabna district unit of BNP leading the 20-km mass contact march from Pabna town to Ataikula. — Star photo

Bamboo production in Greater Kushtia down

KUSHTIA, Nov 20: Production of bamboo in greater Kushtia district is declining due to lack of proper maintenance, nursing of clusters and planned plantation, reports BSS.

The roots, which remain underground after cutting bamboo are lifted at random and later on sold in the open-market as firewood. Even tender bamboo plants are not spared.

Agriculture experts said that proper nursing would enable one plant to grow at least 20 tender plants. At present only two to three tender plants are grown in a year.

The bamboo production is not enhancing as per require-

ment. This has created an adverse effect on both day labourers as well as bamboo based cottage industry.

Repairs and construction of kutchha houses in rural areas are being hampered badly for want of bamboo. Traditional cottage industry that depended on bamboo is also facing extinction.

About 95 per cent houses in the rural areas are kutchha in which bamboo materials are used for construction.

One bamboo is now sold at Tk 80 to 120. Most peasants do not have buying capacity.

planting bamboo saplings while the owners of clusters are ignorant about the methods of

plantation, reports BSS.

Inadequate supply and high cost of bamboo is affecting the bamboo-based cottage industry and construction of kutchha houses in the region.

Kushtia, Chuadanga and Meherpur districts were once rich in bamboo. But most of the clusters are decaying now. The price of bamboo showed marked rise due to short supply.

People are least interested in

planting bamboo saplings while the owners of clusters are ignorant about the methods of

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