

# Salt iodising programme fails in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, Feb 16: A review meeting here revealed a frustrating performance of the coastal district's salt iodising programme that achieved only five per cent of the target, reports UNB.

Twenty-eight salt producing mills of the district remained far from the target of iodised salt production, officials told the review meeting on Mother and Child Status at Hilltop Circuit House on Sunday.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner ASM Mobaial Islam pointed out at the meeting that achievement of the programme in 63 other districts is 78 per cent.

He said there were allegations of not using the iodine machines installed to mix iodine with salt and of mixing insufficient potassium iodide. The Divisional Commissioner directed the officials to take

proper action to overcome this frustrating situation.

The meeting was told that 67 per cent people of the country, mostly mothers and children, have been suffering from various complications, like goiter caused by iodine deficiency.

This deficiency causes mental or physical disorders or even death of children, experts told the meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner Pulin Bihari.

The government, with the financial assistance of UNICEF, has taken up the programme to distribute iodine mixing machines and potassium iodide free of cost to 264 salt mills to ensure use of iodised salt in the country.

Another report from Rangpur says: Selling of non-iodised salt continued without restriction in rural bazaars of the district threatening goitre disease

that is highest in the northern districts.

Defying government restriction a section of unscrupulous traders are selling non-iodised and adulterated salt.

Ignorant poor in rural areas prefer to buy low quality salt at lower price. Conscious consumers are sometimes compelled to buy such salt due to non-availability of iodised salt.

Iodised salt is sold at Tk 10 per kg bag while the same quantity of non-iodised salt is Tk 3.

Besides, unscrupulous traders are found selling non-iodised salt in packet of iodised salt.

Local administration raided some markets in the town recently and realised fine from traders amounting to Tk 1,200 for selling non-iodised salt.



A colourful rally was brought out in Sylhet town on Friday on the occasion of a two-day reunion of the ex-students of Sylhet Government Pilot High School. — Star photo

## Green Belt Project progressing

BARISAL, Feb 16: The implementation of Coastal Region Green Belt Project in 10 southern districts of the country at a cost of Tk 123.16 crore with the financial assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the NORAD has been progressing fast and is expected to be completed within June next, reports BSS.

The districts are Faukakhali, Barguna, Bhola, Pirojpur, Bagerhat, Noakhali, Feni, Laxmipur, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

According to an official source, the forest and environment ministry took up this project in a bid to restore environment and protect disaster in the coastal districts of the country in 1994-95 fiscal year.

A total of 1,300 kilometers protection embankment, 2,700 kilometers highways, 9.0 kilometers roads, and 3,000 kilometers Union Parishad, connecting roads have been brought under this project with different varieties of saplings.

Besides, 2.80 crore saplings of fruit bearing and wooden trees along with high yielding varieties of coconut saplings have been

distributed among the local poor people free of cost for creation of green belt on Union Parishad's roads, around the dwelling houses, educational institutions, religious establishments, cyclone shelters and government office premises in the coastal districts.

The six-year long programme beginning with the 1994-95 fiscal raised and planted high yielding varieties of coconut trees on 1,400 kilometers.

Of the total, 1,300 kilometers of embankment have been brought under nutshell, palm and date tree plantation under the project.

The projects also aim at developing and increasing the forest resources and sources of income of the coastal people.

The government has already taken up a decision to release 50 per cent share of the total scheme among the members of the public for growing mass interest. Of the rest 50 per cent share, 15 per cent will be distributed among the land owners, 20 per cent share for forest department and rest 15 per cent to non-government organisations (NGOs).

## 79 held on various charges from dists

At least 79 people were arrested on various charges in several districts recently, reports agencies.

Police arrested an absconding convict from Chhanda village in Fulpur thana of Mymensingh district.

The convict, identified as Sirajul Islam, was sentenced to life imprisonment in a murder case by a local court in 1993.

He was tried in absentia.

Sirajul stabbed a villager, Ruknuddin, when police with the help of local people raided the village to arrest him.

A report from Bagerhat says: Forest guards arrested eight pirates from the Sundarbans last week.

Officers said forest guards of Shorokhola, Jelely Pally and Dublar Char in a joint raid conducted in the evening nabbed the pirates, including its leader, when they were preparing to commit dacoity and illegal hunting of animals in the Sundarbans.

In Jhalakathi, two youths were arrested along with 39 forged notes of Tk 100 denomination from old bus terminal area in the town on Friday.

The guards also recovered a

gun, ammunition, 3 sharp weapons from the pirates and seized the trawler.

Those arrested are Sohrab Howlader, Nasir Howlader, Abdul Akmah, Khalil Howlader, Baccu Mia of Bhandaria, Nanna Mia of Mathbaria and Sheikh Ali Ahmed of Rampal.

A case was filed with Shorokhola police against them.

In Satkhira, Assasuni thana police in several drivers arrested 65 people, including 41 warrantees and four inter-district dacoits, and recovered four illegal firearms with six live cartridges during the last month.

The officer-in-charge of Assasuni police station Abdul Mannan informed that the police personnel of the thana are patrolling every evening in different areas of the thana to resist all kinds of anti-social and terrorist activities.

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## News snaps

### Deep tubewells inoperative

THAKURGAON, Feb 16: Power connection to 341 deep tubewells have been disconnected in Panchagar, Dinajpur and Thakurgaon district affecting Boro cultivation, reports UNB.

Besides, 108 deep tubewells have been rendered inoperative as power connection was disrupted following burst of transformers and theft of wire. Large areas under Boro cultivation in the three districts have dried up in the absence of irrigation worrying the farmers. Local Palli Bidyut Samity cut off power supply to the deep tubewells for non-payment of outstanding bills amounting to Tk 2.85 crore.

### Allowance for widows

BANDARBAN, Feb 16: The government has allocated a total of Taka 5 lakh 20 thousand as widow allowance for distribution among widows in seven thanas of the hill district, reports BSS.

District Social Welfare Department sources said, the widow allowance will be distributed to 1,305 widows in seven thanas from the last week of the current month. Each widow will get Taka 100 per month.

### 11 phenesidyl bottles seized

TANGAIL, Feb 16: Police recovered 11 bottles of phenesidyl syrup and arrested one woman here recently, reports BSS.

Sadar thana police arrested Suria Begum, 35, from Adalatpara area of the town. A case was filed with Sadar thana in this connection.

### School bldgs to be built

CHUADANGA, Feb 16: The Ministry of Education will develop three non-government high schools in Chuadanga at a cost of Taka 30 lakh, reports BSS.

The facilities department of the ministry has taken up a programme to construct a building consisting of two class rooms in each of the three schools. The schools are Alamdanga Boys' High School in Alamdanga, Damurhuda Boys' High School in Damurhuda and Jibannagar Girls' High School in Jibannagar thana. The construction works will be started soon.



In Sultan Shahida Islam MJF District Governor of District 315A-1 Bangladesh laying the foundation stone of Daripattan Mother and Child Health General Hospital at Golapganj in Sylhet recently. Habibur Rahman, Divisional Commissioner, Sylhet, Lt Engr Rashed Maksud Khan MJF District Governor, Dist 315 B-1, Bangladesh, Ln Zuber Ahmed Khan, Cabinet Secretary, District 315A-1, Bangladesh are also seen.

### BSCIC training course

SATKHIRA, Feb 16: A two-week training course on 'Industry Initiative' organised by Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) concluded here at a simple function in the Zilla parishad auditorium recently.

The function was presided over by Regional Director of BSCIC, Khulna Division Mohammad Alimuzzaman. Syed Kamal Bokthi MP attended the concluding function as the chief guest while Deputy Commissioner of the district Saiful Alam as special guest. It was addressed, among others, by Vice President of Satkhira Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Sheikh Azhar Ali, Principal of BSCIC Training Institute Fazlul Karim and Deputy Manager of BSCIC Abdus Sattar. About 35 participants took part training course.

### Five get life term

JESSORE, Feb 16: A court here Monday condemned five people to life term in jail in a murder case, reports UNB.

The court also fined them Tk 5,000 each, in default, to suffer six months more rigorous imprisonment. However, one of the convicts, Noor Hossain, died last year. The other convicts were identified as Abdul Master alias Abdel Master, Shahjahan, Abdul Mannan, Abdur Razzaq and Shamsur Rahaman. According to prosecution, the convicts kidnapped one Akbar Ali from the judge court area in broad day light and stabbed him to death on the premises on October 27, 1993. Later on the day, a case was filed with Kotwali thana and police after investigation submitted charge-sheets against them. After examining the records and witnesses, senior special tribunal judge Abdul Hye pronounced the verdict.



Second hand warm clothes, prices of which are high, still on sale during the fair end of the ongoing winter season on various footpaths of Sirajganj town. — Star photo

### Bamboo, straw prices up

KUSHTIA, Feb 16: Prices of house construction materials like bamboo, straw and jute stick continued to surge in the district worsening the sufferings of rural people, reports UNB.

Many poor villagers, who have lost their homesteads in recurring floods and cyclones, could not yet rebuild their houses. Over 7 lakh people in the district out of its 15 lakh population fell prey to floods and cyclones in last few years, officials said. Official documents showed that some 1.6 lakh kutchha houses were either damaged partially or completely in last two years, forcing hundreds of families to take shelter somewhere else. Despite their tremendous efforts, the affected families could not reconstruct their houses, as they did not get any grant from the government for house construction.

### 3,607 tons of wheat sanctioned

BARISAL, Feb 16: A total of 3,607 tons of wheat have been sanctioned for the implementation of 962 projects in ten thanas, including five paurashabas, of the district under Food-For-Works Programme during the current dry season, reports BSS.

According to an official source, of the total, 1,060 tons of wheat have been sanctioned for the implementation of 692 projects under Rural Infrastructure Maintenance Programme while 2,547 tons for the implementation of 270 projects under Rural Infrastructure Repair Programme. Besides, 79.80 tons of wheat have also been utilised for the implementation of 61 projects in Barisal, Bakerganj, Banaripara, Gournadi and Mehdinagar Paurashabas of the district during the period, the source added. The projects to be implemented include construction and reconstruction of bridges, repair of roads, leveling of fields.

### Statue recovered

PANCHAGARH, Feb 16: A statue of Hindu God Vishnu made of touch stone has been recovered from a richshaw van on Bangladeshi road under Tetulia thana recently, reports BSS.

BDR sources said, on secret information, the statue was recovered. A man, who was identified as Emarul Huq, was arrested in this connection.



Water level has fallen sharply in the River Old Brahmaputra. As a result the ferry movement has been threatened. Photo shows many stranded loaded trucks at Jamalpur-Sherpur ferry ghat. — Star photo

## Phenesidyl seized: Three women held in Satkhira

Three women were arrested and 177 bottles of Indian phenesidyl syrup recovered in separate drives in Satkhira recently, report agencies.

Police arrested two alleged female smugglers along with 75 bottles of phenesidyl from Narikelata area.

The two arrested women — Farida and Firoja — were sent to jail. A case was filed.

In a separate drive, police recovered 50 bottles of Indian phenesidyl syrup from a passenger minibus near Narikelata area in the town and arrested one alleged smuggler.

Police sources said, acting on tip-off, Sadar thana police raided a Khulna-bound passenger minibus near Narikelata area in the town and recovered

Pro, anti-CHT accord groups' clash: 1 dies

KHAGRACHHARI, Feb 16: A fierce gunfight between pro and anti-CHT peace accord groups at Noonchhari village in Dighinala thana recently left a tribesman dead and three others injured, reports UNB.

Police said the gunbattle between the two groups erupted at about 7:30 am leaving Bebutam Chakma, 30, dead on the last month.

The rider of the motorbike, however, managed to escape.

They seized the motorbike and filed a case with Sadar thana in this connection.

Sources said, the BDR personnel seized 52 bottles of phenesidyl from a Satkhira bound motorbike coming from Bhomra near at Bakal check point.

Police rushed to the spot to recover the body.

A case was filed with Sadar thana.

In another drive, BDR personnel seized 52 bottles of phenesidyl syrup from a passenger minibus near Narikelata area in the town and arrested one alleged smuggler.

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