

# More power, money for UPs suggested

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Oct 27: Speakers at a meeting of exchanging experiences for enhancement of civic participation and power of local government suggested more power and money for the union parishes to ensure local development.

Sachetan, Rajshahi, a Rajshahi-based non-governmental organisation working with socio-economic development agendas, organised the daylong meeting in assistance with International Voluntary Services (IVS).

Held at Poba upazila auditorium recently, the meeting was participated by chairmen and members of five union parishes of Poba upazila, namely Naohata, Baragachi, Huzurpara, Haripur and Parila. NGO workers, civil society members, journalists, union parishad employees, social workers and representatives from the administrations.

The inaugural session was presided over by Hasnul Islam, general secretary of Sachetan, Rajshahi, District Commissioner of Rajshahi AKM Shamsuddin Ahmed was the chief guest. The session was also addressed by Poba upazila Land Development officer Sohel Imam Khan and IVS country Director Abdul Matin as the special guests. Among others, the inaugural session was also addressed by Parila UP chairman Abdul Gaffar, Haripur UP chairman Bajle Ahsan Al Rajvi, Naohata UP chairman Abdul Gafur, IVS representative Abdul Hamid, Huzurpara UP chairman Harunur Rashid and Sachetan programme officer Abul Kalam Azad.

Naohata UP chairman Abdul Gafur, who was elected consecutively for last three terms, won the prize of the best chairman and took trainings in home and abroad said that in spite of his long experiences as a chairman he had not known many things.



Sachetan, Rajshahi, in assistance with International Voluntary Services organised recently a meeting of sharing experiences on strengthening local bodies and enhancing people's participation in the activities of local bodies. The meeting was held at Poba upazila auditorium in Rajshahi. —Star photo

"Sachetan and IVS have taught me how to run the office smoothly," he said.

Abdul Gaffar, who had been elected chairman of Parila Union Parishad for the first time said that he had known nothing in true sense. "But now I know what my duties are and how those duties should be performed, thanks to Sachetan and IVS," he said.

"We did not know even how to keep books and maintain accounts properly," said Harunur Rashid, who has been elected chairman of Huzurpara union several times and added, "Sachetan and IVS workers have taught us maintenance of books and files".

Bajle Ahsan Al Rajvi, chairman of Haripur union acknowledged that they had not known how to prepare and implement a budget. "Sachetan and IVS with their efforts for last four years have now made these possible for us. We ourselves are now preparing

budget in time and implementing it in phases," he said.

Naohata UP member Yunus Ali said that people of his area did not call them wheat-thieves any more. "This has been possible for Sachetan and IVS who have taught us how to work along with people. Civic participation in our activities has tremendously increased. They now know everything and that is why they do not unnecessarily blame us for which we are not guilty," he said.

Huzurpara UP member Akkas Ali said that they had not been at all sincere to collect tax bearing that their popularity would go down. "Sachetan and IVS have convinced us and now we are collecting tax and observing that our popularity has not been at all affected," he said.

The UP members also cited some troubles they are facing. Yunus Ali said that they were compelled 40 adopt unfair means.

Haripur UP member Altanur

Haque alleged that they had to pursue for having a project. "Without good relation with MPs and ministers and 'managing' government officials one cannot get his project passed," he said.

The chairmen and members demanded more power and direct development funds for the union parishes (UPs). They also demanded appointment of a minimum number of trained employees in the union parishes.

They, at the same time, acknowledged that most of them were not aware of their power and duties. The government is very reluctant in training up the UP chairman and members, they said.

International Voluntary Services (IVS) has been conducting, under the prevailing circumstances, a project titled Advocacy Education for Civic Participation Programme (AECPP) from last four years in 30 union parishes through local NGOs.

The main objective of the programme is to enhance local people's direct involvement with the local democratic bodies and influence the bodies to take decisions in favour of their interests. Another objective of the programme is to create a congenial environment for reciprocal cooperations between the local democratic bodies and friendly organisations with a view to make the local democratic bodies more active and effective.

The meeting observed, regarding the experiences stated by the cross section of people, that AECPP had helped strengthen working capacity of the five union parishes, increased transparency and accountability of the union parishes and enhanced participation of the civic people and local organisations in the activities of the union parishes.

## A success story of Natore traders

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Oct 27: Self-sponsored anti-extortion activities of local business leaders have geared up police-drivers, during last several months in Natore town.

"Local businessmen are now heaving a sigh of relief as most of the 'identified' terrorists who used to take tolls from the businessmen regularly, are taken to jail custody," said Abdus Salam, president of the Natore Central Businessmen's Movement Council for Resistance of Terrorism and Extortion (NCBMCRT).

He also said, that one year ago when local businessmen were cornered by some identified terrorists, we formed NCBMCRT which, in short, was wellknown as Lathi-Bushl (stick-flute) organisation.

"Within a few months, our organisation managed to earn businessmen's confidence and they spontaneously united with us," said Abdus Salam.

He also told this correspondent that he handed over a number of extortionists to police in the meantime.

Businessman Saiful Islam Rogers, general secretary of NCBMCRT told The Daily Star that Natore was at present an extortion-free town. But, he added, activities of the organisation could not satisfy some of local political leaders.

A newcomer in the town may have found himself caught in a sudden breath-taking situation amidst of 'poo-poo' sound of many whistles and people running to and fro with a stick in hand each. But a permanent denizen of Natore town will certainly be confident of that some-

where in some place in the town, there must be some extortionists were caught by the businessmen. This is how, the local businessmen react to the toll collectors. Whenever, they see an extortionist asking toll from a businessman, they themselves or some others will wake up all traders of entire town through continued whistling and all of them will come up with a stick to resist the toll-collectors. For such resistance method, all businessmen are asked by their leaders to keep a whistle and a stick.

However, the extortion could not be removed from the town totally, though it has reduced remarkably. Specially, the construction contractors are still become victims of extortion.

In last May, some agitated terrorists attacked the businessmen in station areas of the town. Mohon, a teen-age employee of an engineering workshop was shot dead during the attack. More than 50 businessmen were also injured in the incident. At least three cases were registered with Natore thana in this connection. The accused persons of the cases are: Masud, Juyel, Rubel, Dinar, Lalbabu, Don Mohammad, Zoha, Shariful, Foren, Sadek, Khokon, Raju, Shameem, Azizul, Sakib, Zalat and Afzal. Most of them, now in the jail custody, had surrendered before magistrates. Police managed to nab a few.

At present police, however, have become active against the towns top terrors following a directive from their high-ups. About 60 persons were arrested recently.



This is not a stick procession of any political party. This is a rehearsal procession by the businessmen in Natore town who have successfully curbed illegal extortion considerably recently. The processionists carrying whistles and sticks with them and chanting slogans against extortionists. —Star photo

## Pirates rule coasts

BARGUNA, Oct 27: Some 300 incidents of piracy took place in coastal areas of the country in the last three months indicating that the law and order situation continues to go down the slope, reports UNB.

According to Trawler Owners' Association, two fishermen were killed and three remained missing during the period, creating panic among the fishermen. The association leaders said the pirates looted fish, fish nets, fuel and spare parts of trawler engines worth of Tk one crore leaving some 60 fishermen injured in the incidents.

They said law-enforcers hardly dare chase the pirates as they hide into the dense forests of the Sundarbans after committing robberies.

The incidents of piracy, they said, rises alarmingly when fishing in the bay and rivers of the

country gains momentum. Sometime, the sea robbers throw the fishermen into the rivers, tying up their hands and legs, or they confine them into the cold storage of trawler during piracy.

In 1994, the government had taken a decision to introduce coast guards in all coastal areas of the country to protect the lives of fishermen. But the decision could not be implemented in six years.

It was also decided that coast guard bases would be set up in 21 points of the coastal areas. But this decision too has been left unimplemented for reason unknown.

The coast base in Patuakhali is understaffed and lacks logistics support like vessels. There are only 30 mariners working there under a commanding officer, according to a competent source.

## Goitre patients up

SHARIATPUR, Oct 27: Number of goitre patients is increasing day by day greater Faridpur district due to iodine deficiency, reports UNB.

Some 58 per cent of population in five districts of greater Faridpur district comprising Shariatpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Rajbari and Faridpur do not consume iodised salt, said a recent study.

Conducted by a local non-governmental organisation, Shariatpur Development Organisation (SDO), the report said due to iodine deficiency the number of disabled people in these districts has been increasing gradually. Iodine is termed as a strong

agent for mental and physical growth. On average, an adult should take 150 micrograms of iodine, which is mainly procured from water and soil. But excessive rainfall and floodwater washed it away from soil.

But as the poor people of remote areas are not aware of the usefulness of iodised salt, they consume non-iodised salt and become victims to different diseases.

To meet country's iodine deficiency, the government enacted a law in 1994 for procuring, selling and using iodised salt. As per the new law, procuring and selling non-iodised salt is strongly prohibited.

## News snaps

### Gas detected in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 27: Engineers of a private firm named North Bengal Subsoil investigator have detected the presence of natural gas in Khudra Sialkool here.

Engineers of the firm said they were testing soil in the area for a proposed industry by a private entrepreneur when they detected the gas. Hundreds of curious people rushed there to see the emission of gas. When contacted Assistant Engineer of the firm said their preliminary test confirmed the presence of gas.

### Degree examinees demonstrate

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Oct 27: Degree class examinees under the banner of All Party Students' Action Committee (APSAC) laid a siege to the office of Deputy Commissioner on Sunday and submitted a memorandum protesting the decision to exchange centres of degrees examinations in the district town.

Earlier, the students brought out a procession in the town. The students at a press conference at Mymensingh Press Club demanded degree examination centres at their own colleges. They threatened if the demand was not met they would go for tougher action programmes including rail and road barricades. Masud Rana Ahmed, convenor of APSAC, Nazmul Islam, Osman Hossain, Syed Sumon Ahmed and Liton Chandra Paul spoke at the press conference.

### Kuliarchar becomes illiteracy-free

KISHOREGANJ, Oct 27: Kuliarchar under Kishoreganj district on Tuesday became illiteracy-free as 37,539 people of the Kuliarchar Sadar and its six unions became literate under the Total Literacy Movement (TLM), reports BSS.

Local Government Minister Zillur Rahman on Tuesday unveiled the plaque of "Illiteracy-free Kuliarchar" at the Upazila Complex here. A total of 17,920 males and 19,619 females from the age groups of 11 to 45 became lettered getting education from 1,330 reading centres in the upazila during the last six months. They proved their literacy by sitting in the final examinations at 310 centres. While unveiling the plaque at the upazila complex, the minister said the present government has strengthened the TLM across the country to make illiteracy-free Bangladesh towards reaching the goal of economic emancipation. He said the country did not reach its desired goal during 21 years prior to the coming of the present government when people were deprived of their right to education.

### Eight flood shelters underway

COMILLA, Oct 27: The construction of eight school buildings cum flood shelters here are progressing satisfactorily, reports BSS.

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is implementing the work at a cost of Tk 79 lakh. In the meantime, 70 per cent work have been completed. The rest will be done very soon. These schools cum flood shelters were damaged during 1998 flood.

### Two housewives beaten to death

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 27: Two house wives were beaten to death in two villages at Kazipur upazila recently.

Police sources said Ambia Beoua, 45, wife of late Moksad Ali of Gandail village was beaten to death by her son and brother-in-law recently. Following an altercation between them, they beat her up to death. After her death they hanged the body with the ceiling fan of a room. A case was lodged with Kazipur police station. But police failed to arrest the culprits. Police recovered the body and sent for autopsy at Sirajganj General Hospital. After autopsy the concerned doctors declared that she had been murdered. Another housewife Lal Vanu, 25, wife of Shahidul Islam of Kabirer village in the same upazila was also beaten to death by her husband and relatives recently. Police sources said her husband proposed to marry another woman. The couple exchanged hot words. The husband and his relatives beat up the victim to death. Police recovered the body and after autopsy the body was handed over to her father. The concerned doctor declared that she had been murdered. A case was also lodged with Kazipur police station. None was arrested.

### 10 phensidyl traders surrender

HABIGANJ, Oct 27: Ten phensidyl traders recently surrendered to a committee of local Narcotics Control Department, reports UNB.

Seven of them were identified as Dail Didar, Sheikh Selim, Touhid Mia, Phensidyl Rahmat, Bachchu Mia, Heroim Jamal and Ramjan Ali of Shyestaganj Municipality. Taking advantage of an amnesty announced by the committee, the drug traders surrendered to the committee in a bid to correct themselves. Local municipality chairman Abdul Razzak heads the committee.

### Wheat for uplift schemes

KISHOREGANJ, Oct 27: Some 97 metric tons of wheat have been allocated for implementing various development schemes in one municipality and six unions of Bhoirab upazila under a test relief programme, reports UNB.

Of the total wheat, 75 mts has been allocated for the six unions while 22 mts for the municipality. Officials said the wheat would be utilised for repairing roads and worship places, educational institutions and playgrounds. During the Bangla months of Ashwin and Kartik, poor people, especially the agriculture labourers, face acute hardship, as they don't have work during this lean period. Any test relief programme gives them an opportunity to earn their livelihoods.

### Incredible weight indeed!

PATUAKHALI, Oct 27: Baby Habib has attained an incredible weight of 41 kg at the age of three years, reports UNB.

Son of fish trader Mohammad Nurul Islam alias Pyada of village Gerakhal in Sadar upazila, Habib is the youngest among four brothers and one sister. He was a normal baby at birth said father Nurul Islam, but started gaining weight soon after. "At present he can't stand up or walk without support", Islam said. According to the local Child Specialist Dr Bikash, it's a genetic disease created by inadequate secretion of a thyroid hormone. Nurul Islam and his wife Shahida Begum are at a loss over their youngest son's ailment.

### Experience-sharing meeting

PIROJPUR, Oct 27: An experience-sharing meeting on capacity-building of Local Government and to ensure increased people's participation in local elected bodies was held at Zila Parishad, reports BSS.

A local NGO "Dak Diye Jai" organised the meeting, sponsored by International Voluntary Services (IVS) under its Advocacy Education for Civic Participation Programme (AECPP). Deputy Commissioner S M Zahurul Islam attended the meeting as the chief guest while ADC Enamul Hoq and IVS Country Director M A Matin were the special guests. NGOs Executive Director Shahjahan Gazi was in the chair. Chairmen, members and women members of union parishes, civil society representatives and NGO workers of different unions attended the meeting.

### Mushroom growth of brick fields

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Oct 27: Brick manufacturing enterprises have mushroomed all over the district posing threat to the environment and fertility of arable lands around the brick fields, reports BSS.

Witnesses said about 10,000 acres of cropland are being used for manufacturing brick and the brick fields owners use mango and other class of trees as firewood. Farmers said agricultural productivity and mango production around the brick fields had declined due to poisonous smoke polluting the environment.

### Winter vegetable farming scheme

MADARIPUR, Oct 27: A total of 17,900 hectares have been brought under the cultivation of winter vegetables in five districts of Barisal Agriculture Region during the current Robi crop season, reports BSS.

The target of production has been fixed at 26,800 tonnes, of the total 4,000 hectares have been brought under vegetable cultivation in Faridpur, 3,000 hectares in Madaripur, 3,200 hectares in Gopalganj, 3,100 hectares in Rajbari and 4,600 hectares in Shariatpur districts. According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources, the vegetables to be produced are tomato, lady's finger, pumpkin, brinjal, cauliflower, china shak, bean, sweet gourd and other vegetables. A source in the AED said, thousands of unemployed youths and students have also started cultivation of winter vegetables.

## Vegetable prices increase

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Oct 27: Prices of vegetables have soared abnormally in markets in the district, causing concern among people.

Wholesalers and retailers in the markets have attributed the abnormal price-hike of vegetables to unprecedented flood in the south-west region, which also includes the district.

Traders also said the flood has damaged various kinds of vegetables on hectares of lands in the region, a major vegetable growing area in the country.

Agriculture official sources said floodwater has damaged all vegetable farms in Kalaroa, Sadar, and parts of Tala and Debhata upazilas in the district. Besides, heavy rain in the region in mid September damaged vegetable fields.

Now the supply has come down to almost one third, said Rawshan Ali, a wholesaler at Sultanpur Bazaar here last week. He said dwindling supply has pushed the prices up.

In the markets last week, brin-

jal was selling between Tk 15 and Tk 18 a kg against the normal price of Tk 8, 'patal' at Tk 12 against Tk 8, 'karia' at Tk 30 against Tk 12, a standard size pumpkin at Tk 15 against Tk 8 to Tk 10 before the flood.

'Puishak' and 'lalshak' were selling at Tk 8 per kg against the normal price of Tk 4. Green chilli has become the hottest. It was selling at Tk 40 a kg against Tk 15 just before the flood. Papaya was being sold at Tk 6 against Tk 3. Prices of potato, onion and

garlic, however, marked a slight increase and were selling at Tk 10, 18 and 30 respectively against Tk 8, 14, and 22.

Our Jhenidah correspondent adds: Buyers, especially those of low-income group, in the flood-affected district face difficulty in kitchen markets as prices of vegetable have almost crossed their purchasing capacity.

In the markets last week, brinjal was selling at Tk 16 a kg against Tk 6 a month ago, potato at Tk 12 against Tk 8, ladies finger at Tk 16 against Tk 8, arum at Tk 12 against Tk 7 and 'patal' at Tk 16 against Tk 8. Now one hundred-gram green chilli was selling at Tk 6 against Tk one.

Jafar Sakth, 39, a farmer of village Fazipur in Shalakupura upazila, said that although there was no flood in the upazila, brinjal and chilli were damaged due to unusual rainfall.

Ahmed Hossain, 45, a vegetable trader at Khalishpur in the district, said he used to send about twenty trucks of vegetables to Dhaka and Barisal markets a week just before the flood. "But now I have nothing to do," he said. He used to collect vegetables from farmers in Kotchandpur and Moheshpur upazilas. The two upazilas have been affected badly by the flood.

### Myanmar prisoner dies

From Staff Correspondent  
SYLHET, Oct 27: A Myanmar national who had been in Sylhet Central Jail here for the last few months died in Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital on Tuesday.

The man, Tengali, 45, had been suffering from different ailments and was admitted to the hospital.

The man along with 36 other compatriots was arrested by Bangladesh coast guards in the Bay of Bengal while fishing illegally. They were sentenced to suffer rigorous imprisonment for different terms. The prisoners were shifted to Sylhet from Chittagong jail on 16 March 1999. The jail terms of these people expired on April 15 of 1998. But the Myanmar government is not showing any interest to take them back, official sources said. Now there are 79 foreigners in Sylhet Jail.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare  
Human Resource Development Unit, PRU  
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka

No. MOHFW/PRU/HRD/Consultant Dated: 03/10/2000

### Notice for Appointment of Local Consultant

Applications are invited from the Bangladeshi nationals for the position of a 'Local Consultant' for the Human Resource Development Unit (HRDU) of the Policy and Research Unit, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The particulars of the post are as follows:

Post Title:	Number of Post:	Duty Station:
Local Consultant (HRD)	1 (one)	Dhaka, Bangladesh

Duration: 12 (twelve) months.  
Salary: As per approved Operational Plan.  
Terms of Reference: (TOR)

**i) Duties and Responsibilities.**

- Provide technical assistance and advice to the HRD unit of the PRU, issues regarding the development of Policy Research for Human Resource Development.
- Assist in work plan design, implementation and evaluation under an activity plan focused on policy-relevant HRD subjects that are crucial for the Health and Population Sector Strategy of the government.
- Provide strategies for research and research-based indicators that can monitor high priority issues of human resource policy development for HPSP and the Health and Population Sector.
- Design, Implement Policy Research in the field of human resource development.
- Work with long-term expatriate consultant to provide policy guideline for ensuring the highest standards for human resource policy development for HPSP service delivery in Bangladesh.

**ii) Qualification & Experience:**

- A minimum postgraduate degree in Human Resource Development/Human Resource Management/Health Economics/Public Health. Applicants having a Ph.D degree in related field would be given preference.
- At least 3 years experience in the field of human resource development in public sector or NGOs as well as an understanding of civil service reforms, Health Economics, Management Development and Community Participation issues.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently to develop operational research proposals, methodologies and policy level human resource development programmes.
- Proven ability to communicate effectively in English both verbally and in written form and to deal with both applied and policy level human resource development questions.
- Proven ability in Research Design (qualitative and quantitative), Conducting, Reporting and Evaluation of Research programme.
- Experience in Quantitative and Qualitative data analysis using statistical data analysis package (i.e. STATA/SPSS).
- Experience in Policy Analysis in the field of HRD in the public sector.

Applicants in government/semi-government service and autonomous bodies should apply through proper channel.

Applications should accompany a complete CV, two copies of passport size photographs, attested photocopies of all educational and experience certificates and names and addresses of two referees with telephone numbers. Only short-listed candidates will be invited for interview.

The last date of submission of application is 15<sup>th</sup> November 2000.

**Md Abul Qusem**  
Joint Chief and Line Director  
Policy and Research Unit

DEP-25652-23/10  
G-1878

**Directorate General Defence Purchase**  
Ministry of Defence  
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

### Re-Tender Notice

1. Sealed tenders are invited in local currency from bonafide Manufacturers/ Dealers/ Suppliers/Indentors (Enlisted Firm) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh Army:

Sl No	Nomenclature	Date of Selling		Date of Opening	Currency	Tender No
		From	To			
a.	Fd Wksp. Demolition & Mining Eqp (Qty-2 Line)	1-11-2000	14-11-2000	15-11-2000	Local	1047/P-7

2. Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (not refundable) during office hours between 0800 hours to 1300 hours. The tender can be dropped latest by 1000 hrs and opened at 1005 hours on the specified date of opening in presence of all tenderers (if present).

ISPR/Misc/858  
DEP-25652-23/10  
G-1877

**Li Col**  
For Director General