NATIONAL



Unabated erosion by the River Mahananda at Tetulia in Panchagarh district has created an alarming situation.. Lands in Bangladesh territory are disappearing into the river running alongside the border and a vast tract of land is surfacing along the Indian territory. Indian citizens collect stones along the river which is available abundantly during the rainy season, while Bangladeshi citizens are deprived of it. Immediate steps should be taken for protecting the vast river bank as well as adjacent areas located in the important border region.

BNP factions united, at last

AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj

Two factions of Sirajganj unit of BNP have been united, at last.

The unification move was finalised after one year nine months at a meeting held on Saturday night at the residence of Abdul Aziz Sarkar, a prominent BNP leader. The local unit of BNP was divided in April 1999 over a rumour at that time that Iqbal Hasan Mahamud Tuku was going to get the nomination from Sirajganj- 2 constitutency in the next general election.

Alamgir-al-Amin Kazol, son of Shmsul-al-Amin, a renowned industrialist of initiated the split in the party convening a meeting with the former organising secretary and former municipality chairman TRM Nur-e-Alam Helal and some other leaders of the party. Afterwards, the BNP Chairperson, Begum Khaleda Zia, expelled TRM Nur-e-Alam Helal and Alamgir al-Amin Kazol from the party. Since then the two BNP factions were chalking

other occasions. The factions led by TRM Nur-e-Alam Helal and Kazol were carrying out party activities through another party office at New Dhaka Road.

out separate programmes on various national days and

Now both the factions are united and committed to work unitedly for the greater interest of the party and nation. They already brought out a joint procession in the town after their unification.

When contacted over telephone TMA Mannan MP, Convenor of the BNP district committee and central BNP Executive Committee member Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku separately told this correspondent that they got united for the welfare of the party and the country alike. They will work in favour of the person to whom BNP Chairperson gives nomination. The meeting recommended for withdrawn of expulsion order of TRM Nur-e-Alam Helal and Alamgir Alamin Kazol and sent the recommendation to BNP chairperson.

TLM fails in Narsingdi

The programme for Total Literacy Movement (TLM) Dipyaman Narsingdi' phase-1, launched in four upazilas out of six in Narsingdi district has failed to achieve the

Shortage of fund, absence of monitoring system and lack of adequate logistic support were attributed to the failure for reaching the objective.

The district administration launched the programme on August 14 last year in Raipura, Belabo, Monohardi and Sadar upazilas amidst much fanfare and enthusi-

Officials claim 2,81,574 illiterate adults were brought under the programme.

But soon the teachers, supervisors and coordinators involved in the programme were disillusioned for nonpayment of salary and lack of

logistic support. The district administration set up 60 education centers, 15 in each upazila, including Narsingdi and Madhabdi municipalities for six months on experimental basis. The centres were to impart non-formal education to 18,000 adult illiterate persons in 56 unions. Some 30 learners were enrolled in each

But the project was stopped

Total population of the project area is 15 lakh of whom 2,81,574 illiterate adults were planned to give non-normal education in phase-1 of

The government has allocated more than Tk 2 crore for the purpose. But TLM office received Tk 25.75 lakh out of which Tk 22 lakh have been spent for training of teachers, publicity and motivational

It is not yet clear if the education centers will be reopened. The teachers were engaged on a monthly retainer allowance of Tk 500 and supervisors Tk 800. Supervisors who are teachers of local government primary schools are to guide the teachers of nonformal education.

The project in-charge Magistrate Abdur Rashid told that the district administration has recently sent a letter to Non-formal Education Directorate asking for Tk 4 crore to implement it.

He said government has allocated Tk 2 crore which is yet to reach them. The programme would be resumed to complete if and when

The TLM authority after proper training entrusted one teacher to run one centre. The government is to supply books and other necessaries for running the education centres even at night.

Separate monitoring cell has been established in the collectorate building to see proper execution of

TLM programme of the government was aimed at developing human resources, life and livelihood, sanitation, drinking water, food and nutrition, population control, health care, plantation and income generating activities like agriculture, handicrafts and small cottage industries.



Muktagacha upazila unit of Awami League protested the evil designs of the communal forces by arranging a meeting in Muktagacha recently. A procession led by the central leader of Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, cultural organisation of the ruling party, and noted social worker Rashida Muhiuddin followed the meeting which paraded the main thoroughfares of the town.

Problems grip Netrakona Maternal, Child Care Centre

Netrakona Maternal and Child Care Centre which is only shelter for pregnant women and new-born children is beset with multifarious problems including shortage of seat, accommodation problem, shortage of medicine and accommodation problem.

Emergency Obstetrics Care (EOC) programme has begun here from September in 1999 and 50 operations have been completed till filling of this report.

Before the starting of EOC programme, the serious pregnant patients have to go to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH). Poor patient could not go to MMCH for want of sufficient money and they were compelled to depend on midwife.

There is only one delivery ward where there are seven beds

Netrakona Sadar Hospital is unable to treat properly the pregnant patients for want of necessary instruments.

As a result all pregnant women here are compelled to come to Netrakona Maternal and Child Care Centre.

When contacted with Dr Ferdous Ara Akther, In-Charge of the hospital, she told this correspondent that 10 to 15 pregnant women come here for delivery very day. As a result many patients have to floor.

Shortage of medicine is another problem in the hospital. The patients do not get all the medicines from the hospital. There is only one Aya (helping staffer) in hospital who cannot do all the cleaning in the works.

Residential problems grip the hospital. There are two residences for health visitors, but five health visitors, are working here.

When contacted with the admitted patients of the hospital, they told this correspondent that the doctors and the visitors always behave well with them, but they face an acute accommodation problem.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to look in to the matter and take necessary steps in this



(L-R) A physician inquiring about the condition of health of a patient, while a pregnant woman is seen flooring due to acute accommodation problem at Netrakona Maternity and Child Health Care Centre.

Crimes up in Jamalpur, Faridpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminal activities like murder, rape and clash have increased alarmingly in recent days in Jamalpur and Faridpur districts, indicating deterioration in law and order situation. Our Jamalpur correspondent

adds: More than 1.500 criminal cases were recorded with police in the last six months in Jamalpur. A total of 96 girls were raped and twenty of them murder in the last six

months, police sources said. Incidents of 53 abductions occurred during the period. At least 85 robberies were committed during the period. However, police seized a huge quantity of arms and ammunition from different

parts of the district. A ten-year-old boy was tortured to death by some unidentified hoodlums in the town on January

BNP leader

hurt in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The General Secretary of Chowgacha upazila unit of BNP,

Zohurul Islam, who is also the

Chairman of Potibila union under

the same upazila and two other

party activists have been injured,

one of them very seriously in a

violent clash between two rival

groups at Panchnauma, near

Islam, Younus Ali and Ismail

Hossain. They have been admitted

to the local Upazila Health Complex.

his group was holding a meeting,

the other group led by the president

local upazila unit of BNP, A Salam,

equipped with arms attacked them

leaving the aforementioned persons

injured. The difference over recon-

stitution of the Juba Dal committee

local police station visited the spot

Police have been deployed at the

local BNP office. No case has

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of the

was the cause of this incident.

recorded till filing of this report.

The injured persons are Zohrul

When Zohurul Islam along with

Chowgacha bazaar on Saturday.

According to police, the victim

was identified as Atique, son of Abul Hasem of Jhigatola area in Jamalpur town. The hoodlums took the boy in an under construction building and strangled him.

Local people have expressed concern over the upward trend in murder, rape and violence. They have urged the authorities concerned to take proper steps to improve the law and order situation.

But some police officials, on condition of anonymity said, influential people always back criminals. If they do not stop patronising the criminals, the situation will not be improved, they added.

Our Faridpur correspondent reports: On February 2 a young man was stabbed to death in Faridpur

The victim was identified as Litton, 22, son of Ahmed Jamadder, Unidentified hoodlums numbering about eight stabbed indiscriminately the youth at Alipur intersection. He in Dhaka later

A case was lodged with Koatwali police station in this connection. None was arrested.

In another incident, on Thana Road in the district headquarters two people including a woman were injured in a bomb blast

According to police, Shahana Farque, wife of the district Jubo League president Faruque Hossain, and a rickshaw puller received injuries when a bomb was hurled on the rickshaw, which remained stationed. Shahana was waiting for her husband who went to the district Awami League office.

In separate incident, Ujjal, 20, son of freedom fighter Enayet Khan of Alipur, was shot dead at on January 13 near Alipur Government Food Godown in the town.

His father lodged a case with Kotwali police station

Factional clash: Rail stations in Chuadanga in bad shape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chuadanga

Hundreds of train passengers in Chuadanga district have been facing immense sufferings because of the poor services at rail stations. The passengers said the condition of ten railway stations in the district is

deplorable. Outsiders and vendors usually occupy the waiting rooms of the stations, they added.

A number of tea-stalls, small shops and vendors have occupied parts of platforms. Over bridges in five rail stations have also been almost unfit for use, but no body is concerned about it.

At night homeless people and the anti-social elements occupy the platform areas. They even take bath and cook food in all these stations Surrounding of the ten stations-- Chuadanga, Alamdanga, Munshigani,

Mominpur, Gairdghat, Joyrampur, Darsana, Darsana Halt, Uthali and Ansarbaria -- remains dirty most of the time. The gamblers and sex workers, who virtually rule station areas after

dusk, often harass passengers. Most of the areas plunge into darkness after the sunset. Railway police are often seen to take toll from them. Staff at the ticket counters start selling tickets just before arrival of a train.

As a result, departing passengers have to rush to counters, causing unnecessary hassle, which is a very common feature. The waiting rooms remain closed in most of the time. Besides, in many

stations there has been no toilet facility. Local people have urged the authorities concerned to take immediate

steps to the existing problem of the rail stations

Boro farming going on in full swing in two dists

AGENCIES, Panchagarh/ Mymensingh

Despite facing many problems, the farmers of Panchagarh and Mymensingh districts employed their full strength to cultivate Boro paddy.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said some 24,500 hectares of land has been brought under Boro cultivation in the current season in Panchagarh with an output target of 74,000 mts of

Majority of farmers in Panchagarh district have been facing problems in Boro cultivation due to want of cash money following price debacle of Aman paddy.

Many farmers are taking loans from the moneylenders at high interest after they failed to get loan from the banks, the farmers alleged. Even some farmers are selling their *Boro* paddy in advance at a throwaway price to meet the cost of cultiva-

tion, informed sources said. Moreover, scarcity of seedlings has been prevailing in the district as Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) allegedly failed to supply seeds

among the farmers as per requirement Now the farmers of Panchagarh district are buying seedlings imported from Bogra district and planting

The officials said the production of Boro paddy may

Cultivation of Boro paddy in all the 12 upazilas under

cross the target if favourable weather prevails through-

Mymensingh district is going on in full swing.

DAE took a massive plant to bring 2,82,000 hectares under Boro cultivation in Mymensingh district during the current season. DAE also fixed the production target of paddy at 5,36,200 tons.

Of the total, DAE will bring 1,75,000 hectares under high yielding variety (HYV) to produce 5,25,000 tons of paddy and 7,000 hectares under local variety to produce 11,200 tons of paddy.

Of the total, 14,500 hectares will be brought under Boro cultivation to produce 42,800 tons of paddy in Sadar upazila, 11,870 hectares to produce 35,092 tons in Muktagachha, 13,050 hectares to produce 38,800 tons in Fulbaria, 11,950 hectares to produce 35,360 tons in Trishal, 13,400 hectares to produce 39,640 tons in Bhaluka, 13,950 hectares to produce 41,360 tons in Gafargaon, 15000 hectares to produce 42,200 tons in Nandail, 12,400 hectares to produce 36,640 tons in Ishwarganj, 15,100 hectares to produce 44,320 tons in Gouripur, 36,000 hectares to produce 1,09,632 tons in Phulpur, 13,600 hectares to produce 41,392 tons in Haluaghat and 9,500 hectares to produce 28,996 tons n Dhubaura upazila.

NEWS SNAPS

Schoolboy drowns

UNB, Jhalakathi

A schoolboy drowned in a pond at Kathalia upazila in Jhalakathi district on Wednesday. The dead was identified as Sumon, 10, a Class-III student of Kathalia Model Government Primary School and son of Kabir Hossain Jamaddar.

Family sources said Sumon drowned in the pond on way home from the school. Later, the body was recovered from the pond at about 2:30 pm on the day.

Students yet to get textbooks

UNB. Barguna

Although the new academic year began one and a half months before, primary students of Barguna district did not receive all the textbooks yet. "Only a few books reached the students, we don't know when all the students will get all the books to start their study,' said a visibly looking disappointed guardian.

Besides, books of only four subjects of Class-IX are available in the bookstores, which are sold at higher prices than the real price. Guardians alleged that owners of the bookshops are forcing the students to buy lower quality notebooks with the textbooks. Some storeowners said they had to buy the textbooks of the board at exorbitant prices and as such they are compelled to force the students to buy the notebooks.

24 mini irrigation schemes abandoned

UNB, Kurigram

Some 24 mini irrigation schemes in greater Rangpur and Dinajpur districts remained abandoned for want of fund. Water Development Board had taken up the schemes in 1965-66 to provide irrigation on 12,186.64 acres of land in 13 upazilas of Kurigram, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Gaibandha and Dinajpur districts. The project works, completed in 1970-71, included construction of 24-pump houses and 2,44,306

But the pump houses became inoperative due to accumulation of silts in the riverbeds. Besides, the authorities stopped sanctioning fund after the inauguration of Teesta Barrage project, lying the pump houses abandoned, said an official. Staff quarters of the employees of the schemes are also lying abandoned for long, turning the barracks into a den of anti-social elements, locals alleged

Tk 6.56 lakh looted

UNB, Narayanganj

In a dacoity armed bandits looted Tk 6.56 lakh in cash and gold ornaments from a house at Uttarpara of Kadamtali village under Siddhirganj upazila in Narayangaj district on Saturday night. Police said a gang of 8/10 masked robbers entered into the house of Humayun Kabir, a local agent of Akiz Biri Company and decamped with the booty.

The robbers also injured daughter and son of Humayun Kabir when they were shouting for help. Local people caught Suman, 30, and Hasan, 28, for their alleged involvement in the dacoity and handed them over to the police. A case was filed.

Construction work of bridge begins

UNB, Rajbari

Construction work on a 29-metre long bridge has begun at Shahmirpur in Pangsha upazila in Rajbari district at a cost of Tk 26.34 lakh. Local MP Mohammad Zillul Hakim formally inaugurated the construction work on Thursday. Officials said the bridge would be completed in the current fiscal under the

supervision of District Council.

Liquor seized: One held

UNB, Habiganj

Police arrested a man along with 95 bottles of Indian phensidyl and 66 bottles of liquor from Sabashpur village in Sadar upazila in Habiganj recently.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the house of Abdul Wahid and arrested him along with the drug and liquor. A case was filed.

113 more community clinics to be set up

UNB, Joypurhat The government has decided to set up 113 more community clinics in five upazilas in

Joypurhat district in the current fiscal. A total of 47 community clinics have already been constructed in the district in an attempt to reach the healthcare facilities to the doorsteps of rural people. Of the clinics, 12 were constructed in sadar upazila, 13 in Panchbibi, seven in Kalai, seven in Khetlal and eight in Akkelpur. According to a senior official, tenders for the construction of 64



Standard Chartered Bank organised a children's painting competition recently on the first anniversary of its branch in Sylhet. The competition was held in the premises of the bank branch which was participated by the students of two prominent schools of Sylhet-Ananda Niketan and Blue Bird High School. The participants were of two age categories: 8 to 12 years and 13 to 16 years.