

NEWS SNAPS

CARE provides loan to distressed women

UNB, Chuadanga

In its efforts to help eradicate poverty by creating employment opportunities, CARE, a leading NGO, is providing soft loan to distressed women in Chuadanga.

As part of the programme, the NGO distributed Tk 3 lakh among the poor women of Khadimpur union on Saturday. UP chairman Abdul Halim Mondal distributed the loan. Each of 60 women received Tk 5,000.

A rare example of communal harmony

UNB, Chuadanga

When incidents of communal attacks are being reported from various parts of the country, the minority people at a remote village of Chuadanga have set a rare example of communal harmony.

The Hindu community of Asman Khali village in Alamdanga upazila suspended all Durga Puja rituals following the death of a fellow Muslim villager. Locals said on Oct 26, the day of Bijoya Dashami, Asir Uddin of the village died of cardiac arrest. To show respect to the deceased, the Hindu devotees refrained from performing their Puja rituals, including the immersion of the image Durga. The deities were immersed the following day.

Political rivalry reaches its extreme point

UNB, Sirajganj

Political rivalry between two main political parties in Sirajganj has reached such a stage that political activists have started filing case against each other for even silly matters.

A case was recently filed after an Awami League worker killed a goat of a BNP worker Anwar Hossain when it entered into his field at Charkushaba village in Tarash upazila Friday. Fed up by filing of the case, officer-in-charge of local police station Rashidul Islam said it's difficult to initiate such a case. "They are simply wasting our time," he said.

Teesta devours five Asrayan barracks

UNB, Rangpur

Erosion by the Teesta river has taken a serious turn devouring five barracks of Asrayan Project at Bagdohara in Gangachara upazila of Rangpur in last one week.

Locals said some 50 homeless families of the project have taken shelter on nearby highlands. Local union parishad chairman apprehends that the Asrayan Project would entirely go into the gorge of the river if measures were not taken immediately to check the erosion.

'Aman' cultivation on 7,18,782 hectares

UNB, Magura

Some 7,18,782 hectares of land have been brought under 'Aman' cultivation in 10 districts of Khulna division this season, surpassing the target of 7,08,900 hectares.

The 'Aman' output also appears to exceed the original target of 17,72,250 metric tons as the enthusiastic farmers brought additional 9,882 hectares of land under cultivation on the back of fair weather. Of the total land, 43,685 hectares were cultivated in Magura, 1,29,515 in Jessore, 85,100 in Jhenidah, 19,405 in Narail, 1,12,145 in Khulna, 1,09,995 in Bagerhat, 1,14,010 in Salkhira, 53,357 in Kushtia, 32,100 in Chuadanga and 19,470 hectares in Meherpur, officials said. Over 28,705 metric tons of additional paddy is likely to be produced in the division if the weather continues to do the favour.

T-'Aman' paddy under pest attack

UNB, Netrakona

Transplanted 'Aman' paddy on vast tracts of land of Netrakona have come under pest attack causing concern among the farmers.

The pests are known as 'Leaf ruler', 'Chungi', 'Goll Machi' etc. Young leaves of the paddy plants turn into gray or yellowish within a few days of the attack and black spots are developed on the affected leaves. Farmers of different villages of Atpara, Kendua, Purbadhala, Madan, Barhatta and Sadar upazilas alleged that block supervisors never go to the agricultural fields and prepare imaginary report of visiting the paddy fields. Farmers said the problem has aggravated further as they failed to control the pest despite spraying of pesticides. They urged the officials concerned to take immediate measures to combat the menace.

Bumper harvest of 'Aman' paddy likely

UNB, Manikganj

As farmers of Manikganj have started harvesting 'Aman' paddy, seasonal day labourers from various regions are rushing here in search of agricultural works.

Like previous years, huge day labourers are assembling at Aricha Ghat everyday from where they are hired by big farmers at Tk 55-60 a day. Agriculture officials here said 'Aman' cultivation in Manikganj surpassed the target by 5,000 acres of land and they were expecting bumper harvest this season too.

32 shops gutted in Brahmanbaria

UNB, Brahmanbaria

A terrible fire raged through Mandabhabag Bazar in Kasba upazila of Brahmanbaria burning down 32 shops Monday night.

Police said the fire originated from an electric short circuit in a grocery shop at dead of night and soon engulfed the adjacent shops. Firefighters from Comilla, Brahmanbaria Sadar and Akhaura upazilas rushed to the spot and put out the flame with the help of local people. The extent of damage was said to be Tk one crore.

Reception to two MPs in Chuadanga

BSS, Chuadanga

Two newly elected Jatiya Sangsad members of Chuadanga were accorded reception by the District Bar Association here recently.

The two Jatiya Sangsad members are Shahidul Islam Biswas and Alhaj M Mozammel Hoque. The reception meeting was presided over by Golam Rahman, President of the District Bar Association. Among others, Abul Hussain, ADC (general and revenue), Chuadanga, ADM Noor Uddin Ahmed, Advocate Selim Uddin Khan, Advocate Abdus Sattar and Advocate Moniruzzaman addressed the meeting.

Total Literacy Movement faces setback

UNB, Kurigram

Activities of the ambitious Total Literacy Movement (TLM) - Sonali Kurigram - could not be started due to lack of fund.

Although work on the pilot project was completed two and a half years back in nine upazilas of Kurigram, but the main project is yet to be begun. The programme was undertaken in December 1998 in view of giving some 4,88,966 illiterate people. The programme was divided into two phases. Work on the pilot project of the two phases was conducted allocating fund from ADP. Under the programme, it was decided to literate 263,353 people through 8,779 centres while 225,613 through 7,557 centre in the second phase.

Agriculture scientists' conference at BAU

BSS, Mymensingh

Mymensingh Agriculture University (BAU) held a conference of the Agriculture Scientists in Mymensingh recently.

The opening session of the conference was attended by former Vice Chancellor of (BAU) Prof Shah Muhammad Faruk as chief guest. It was presided over by Prof Muhammad Shahidullah Talukder, President of Mymensingh branch of the Institution of Engineers of Bangladesh. The function was addressed, among others, by the Vice-President of Central Committee Dr Golam Mohiuddin, Dr Nurul Huda, Dr Khandaker Azaharul Islam, Dr M Abul Kashem, Dr KC Roy and General Secretary of the Institution of Engineers, Mymensingh branch, Nasiruddin Tarafdar.

Two young girls rescued from traffickers

UNB, Jessore

Police rescued two young girls and arrested three alleged traffickers from a brothel in Jessore town on Thursday.

Police said human traffickers Alauddin, Shahidul and Jahangir brought Rokeya Begum, 18, from Dhaka and Shefali Begum, 16, from Khulna in the name of giving them better jobs. But, the three sold them to two pimps of Jhalaipatty brothel in the town. On information, police raided the brothel and rescued Rokeya and Shefali. Later, the three traffickers were also arrested from Ghojperpara area in the town. A case was filed with police in this connection.

Nine of a Hindu family embraces Islam

UNB, Nilphamari

Nine members of a Hindu family at village Chirabija in Jaldhaka upazila of Nilphamari have embraced Islam.

Impressed by the principles of Islam, Veltu Ram Roy and Dhaula Barman along with their family members came to Deputy Director Rashid Mia of local Islamic Foundation on Oct 18 and embraced Islam, the religion of peace. They later went to local Notary Public and took Muslim names. They are Ayesha Siddiqua, 45, Abu Abdullah, 28, Abdul Hakim, 25, Umme Habiba, 22, Asma Begum, 20, Fatema Begum, 19, Nurul Huq 11, Joybab Banu, 8 and Umme Kulsum, 6.

Massive cotton cultivation scheme in Jessore region

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Cotton Development Board (CDB) has taken up a programme to bring 36,000 hectares of land under cotton cultivation in Jessore region this season.

The massive programme has been taken up to make the cotton deficiency caused by the devastating flood and severe rainfalls of last year.

According to CDB office sources, 54,012 farmers of 68 cotton farming units in eight districts of four zones will cultivate cotton this season. A total of 37,467 metric tons of cotton seeds worth Tk 93.67 crore is likely to be produced in the current season.

CDB sources said 10,685 farmers have been selected to produce 8,815 metric tons in Chougachha-1, Chougachha-2, Barobazar, Khajura, Kotwali, Rupdia, Manirampur, Jhapa, Rajganj, Keshabpur, Hasanpur, Tala, Patkelghata, Jhikargachha-1, Jhikargachha-2, Sharsa, Ulashi and Degara units of Jessore, Satkhira and part of Jhenidah districts in Jessore zone.

A total of 13,636 farmers of Jhenidah and Magura districts in Jhenidah zone have brought their lands under this programme to produce 9,412 metric tons of cotton seeds worth Tk 23.53 crore through 18 units. The units are Jhenidah Sadar, Dakbangla, Saikupa, Hatfaridpur, Ichhakhada, Magura, Sripur, Satruzitpur, Langalbandha, Mohammadpur, Kotchandpur, Bidyadharpur, Mohepur, Shyamkur, Gurdah, Napa and Jinnanagar.

As many as 16,217 farmers are likely to produce 9,646 metric tons of cotton seeds worth over Tk 24.11 crore through 17 units like Chuadanga Sadar,

Dingaidah, Sharatganj, Alokdia, Daulatganj, Ibannagar, Andulbaria, Damurhuda, Karpasdanga, Darshana, Alamdanga, Munshiganj, Aslonkhali, Meherpur, Kedarganj, Mahajanpur and Baradi units of Chuadanga and part of Meherpur in Chuadanga zone.

A total of 13,474 farmers of Khoksha, Khalisakundi, Bhramara, Allardarga, Mathurapur, Baragangdia, Pragpur, Goalgram, Mohiskundi, Gangni, Bhatpara, Bamundi, Betbaria, Kazipur and Baliakandi units of Kushtia, part of Meherpur and Rajbari districts in Kushtia zone will produce 37,467 metric tons of cotton seeds on 28,700 hectares of land.

CDB sources said the Board have already distributed 74,411 kgs of cotton seeds among the farmers for 144 demonstration plots. CDB distributed Tk 634,465 as departmental loan to assist the farmers.

Talking to Mojahar Hossain Mandal, Deputy Director (DD) of CDB, Jessore region, he said to this correspondent that Jagadishpur Regional Cotton Research, Seed Multiplication and Training Centre in Chougachha upazila Jessore has been providing seasonal long training course. Here 25 field level activists of CDB and five female participants from Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) have been participating in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training course. After completion of the training course, the trainees will play an important role in producing quality cotton seeds in the country, he added.

Golam Mortuza, Cotton Development Officer (CDO) Jhenidah informed that many farmers of this area cultivated amaranths and other vegetables as inter-crop with cotton seeds. It ensured extra money as well as nutrition for them, CDO added.



PHOTO: STAR

Mojahar Ali Mandal, deputy director of Cotton Development Board examines a cotton cultivation demonstration plot at village Anandanagar in Saikupa upazila of Jhenidah.

Plight of female patients at Tangail District Hospital

UNB, Tangail

She was lying on the floor, just in a corner of the passageway of the maternity unit. In an almost unconscious state, she was being given saline.

Sakina, 32, of village Gobindashi in Bhuapur thana, was admitted to the District Hospital Monday morning with pregnancy complications. But all the limited seats at the maternity unit were already filled up.

"For last 15 days, she was bleeding. Last night (early hours Monday) her condition deteriorated, and I brought her to this hospital," said Samiran, elder sister of Sakina.

Samiran brought Sakina to the hospital in absence of her husband and was taking care of her sister sitting under the saline stand beside a makeshift bed.

With similar pregnancy complications, Shefali, 20, mother of one child from Kalihati, was also undergoing treatment on the floor, just behind Sakina's bed.

Another young woman, Swaraswati, with post-natal bleeding problem after three months of her delivery, was undergoing treatment at the hospital.

Doctors suspect Swaraswati's placenta remained inside. "If it is so, she may develop cancer unless proper treatment is ensured," said a doctor witnessing the patient's condition during a visit programme, arranged by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

UNFPA organised the visit in different maternal and childcare units and centres in Tangail sadar upazila on Monday as part of a UN Joint Safe Motherhood Initiative (UNJSMI) with UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO.

UNFPA Representative Suneeta Mukherjee, its Deputy Representative Janet E Jackson, F Donny from Headquarters and Assistant Representative Tahera Ahmed, UNICEF Project Officer (Health) Dr Yasmin Ali Haque, WHO's Reproductive Health expert Dr Satyawati Hanna, Deputy Director of Health Services Dr Md Abdul Jalil Mondal, Programme Manager (ESP) of Family Planning Dr Mirza Bareque, and Prof Khalilur Rahman of Dhaka Medical College



UNFPA Representative Suneeta Mukherjee visits a maternal and childcare centre in Tangail on Monday as part of a UN Joint Safe Motherhood Initiative (UNJSMI) with UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO.

Hospital were, among others, on the trip.

The team visited Mother and Child Welfare Centre (MCWC) of Thana Para in the town, a community clinic in Fatepur of Sadar, and a health and family welfare centre (H&FWC) at Dainia in Sadar apart from Tal Palli in Pathrail of Delduar upazila. Earlier, the team made a courtesy call on local Deputy Commissioner Sheikh Abdur Rashid and Civil surgeon Dr Mubarak Hossain.

During the visit, the team members talked to female patients, doctors and nurses, and onlookers. The team also went through the

records.

A young local family planning official, on condition of anonymity, said local clinics generally collect blood from professional donors, which is usually bought and used by patients. "This unscreened blood is a threat to recipients, especially for mothers," he said.

After visiting different centres, clinics and maternity units, UNFPA Representative Suneeta Mukherjee observed that progress was not satisfactory as per effort. To cut the ratio of MMR and ensure delivery in the centres and hospitals, she underscored the need for initiative of the males in the household.