

## NEWS SNAPS

## JCD activists lock Nandail UNO's office

**UNB, Mymensingh**  
Charging the UNO of Nandail with irregularities in recruitment of supervisors for the government-sponsored TLM programme, activists of Jatityatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) locked his office Monday.

According to competent sources, some leaders and workers of local BNP and its front organisations appeared in a written test for the appointment of TLM supervisors and came out unsuccessful. But the angry JCD activists accused UNO Aji Kumar Pal of indulging in irregularities to deprive their candidates and locked his office driving out the officers and employees at about 11 am. However, the UNO was not present during the incident. The UNO filed a case against some 70 people, including four JCD leaders, with Nandail police station later in the day.

## Lawyers' scuffle embarrasses magistrate

**UNB, Magura**  
A court in Magura saw an untoward incident when lawyers hurled abuses at each other and then locked in a scuffle during hearing of a case Tuesday.

Court sources said Magistrate Aftabul Alam felt embarrassed when Adv Eskandar Azam Bablu seeking bail for the accused of a dowry case and his opponent Adv Abdur Rashid scuffled in the court after an exchange of hot words. Other lawyers of the court came up and brought the situation under control, but the public in attendance scoffed the two advocates.

## Sona Masjid LC station earns profit

**UNB, Chapainawabganj**  
The Department of Youth Development so far disbursed loan amounting to Tk 97.45 lakh among the youths of Chapainawabganj in the current fiscal.

Sona Masjid LC station in Chapainawabganj earned over Tk 2.88 lakh as plant quarantine fee in the first four months of the current fiscal. Official sources said quarantine certificate is necessary to prove the imported agricultural products free from disease. Plant Quarantine Department of Agriculture Ministry issues the certificate in exchange of certain fees. The authorities earned the money in the months of July, August, September and October of the current year. The imported agricultural goods included tomato, orange, apple, maize, oil cake, bran, onion, garlic, turmeric, cumin seeds, lentil, chili, ginger, and tobacco.

## Loan disbursed among youths

**UNB, Chapainawabganj**  
The Department of Youth Development so far disbursed loan amounting to Tk 97.45 lakh among the youths of Chapainawabganj in the current fiscal.

According to official sources some 947 youths were benefited from the loan. Of them, 737 are male and the rest 210 female. Meanwhile, the department realised Tk 65.91 lakh outstanding loan out of the target of Tk 69.57 lakh. Besides, the department imparted training on various trades to a total of 8,193 youths.

## Prices of iftar items soar in dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prices of iftar items soared in four districts in the month of Ramadan. **Our Natore Correspondent reports:** The prices of vegetables, spices and edible oil increased on the very first day of this month despite huge supply. Natore municipal authority recently called upon the marketeers through loud speakers to keep the prices of commodity stable in local markets. The marketeers were also urged not to make any artificial crisis.

But the businessmen in Natore did not pay heed to the request. Even they said, the prices of essentials may rise further ahead the Eid-ul-Fitr.

Gram, the main iftar item, is selling between Tk 32 and Tk 36 per kg. Pulse is being sold between Tk 42 and 44 per kg. 'Khesari' pulse is selling at Tk 30 per kg. These two items are used for preparing popular iftar items.

Puffed rice was selling at Tk 36 per kg last week. Prices of onion, garlic, ginger, and winter spices, become costlier. One kg of onion is now selling at Tk 28 per kg, garlic at Tk 45 and ginger at Tk 28.

Prices of edible oil, mainly soyabean oil, increased marginally from Tk 32 to Tk 40 per litre. Prices of cauliflower, cabbage, lentil have also risen by Tk 4 to Tk 6 per kg.

Meanwhile, prices of fine quality rice was selling at Tk 15 and coarse rice at Tk 13 per kg as against Tk 13 and 10 respectively a few weeks ago.

**Our Faridpur correspondent reports:** Brinjal is being sold at Tk 20 instead of Tk 12 to 15 a kg, cauliflower at Tk 30 instead of Tk 20 to 25 a kg a couple of days ago, cabbage at Tk 16 to 20 instead of Tk 15 a kg. Cucumber at Tk 20 to 25 instead of Tk 16 a kg, tomato at Tk 40 a kg as against Tk 30, bean at Tk 40 a kg instead of Tk 30.

Green chilli is selling in Faridpur at Tk 50 a kg instead of Tk 30 to 40 a kg before the start of Ramadan.

Onion is selling at Tk 40 a kg instead of Tk 30, 'Khesari' (pulse) is being sold at Tk 28 a kg instead of Tk 24 a few days ago, date at Tk 30 to 35 as against Tk 28, fried rice (mun) at Tk 40 a kg in place of Tk 30 a kg before the beginning of the Ramadan.

Beef in selling at Tk 80 to 85 a kg instead of Tk 70 a kg, mutton at Tk 120 a kg in place of Tk 100, and chicken (local) at Tk 90 a kg instead of Tk 80 to 85 a kg before the beginning of the Ramadan.

When asked about the sudden rise in prices of essential commodities, some traders of Haji Shariatullah Market told this correspondent that the prices of the above mentioned commodities have gone up abnormally due to short-supply.

But some other traders said that the prices have gone up due to unscrupulous activities of the businessmen.

Meanwhile, acute scarcity of fried rice locally called "Muri" has been prevailing in Faridpur for a few weeks past causing much inconveniences to "Muri" loving people. Fried rice is reportedly one of the best 'iftar' items for the fasting Muslims.

According to market sources fried rice is being sold in the local markets at Tk 35 to Tk 45 a kg as per quality instead of Tk 20 to Tk 25 before the start of the Ramadan.

Tasty 'Muri' is not available in the markets now-a-days.

When contacted some fried rice traders told this correspondent that irri-boro paddy-II which is most suitable for 'Muri' is not available in the markets. The particular paddy for 'Muri' will be available in the next harvesting season in April or May, they said.

Due to short supply, prices of fried rice have been shot up. Some shopkeepers said that prices of 'Muri' may increase further.

**Our Mymensingh correspondent reports:** Onion is being sold at Tk 30 against Tk 20 per kg, dry chilli at Tk 52 against Tk 44 per kg, green chilli at Tk 40 against Tk 20 per kg.

Musur (pulse) is being sold at Tk 34 against Tk 32 and Tk 36 per kg. Ginger is being sold at Tk 28 against Tk 20 per kg before the starting of holy Ramadan.

Non soyabean oil is being sold at Tk 34 against Tk 32, per litre, mustered oil at Tk 48 against Tk 44 per kg.

Non fried rice is being sold at Tk 28 per kg. Meanwhile, hundreds of makeshift roadside iftar stalls have been set up causing traffic jam on important turning points of the town.

**Our Chuadanga correspondent reports:** Rice is now being sold at between Tk 12.50 to 15 per kg. Flour is being sold at between Tk 12 to 13 per kg. Soyabean oil is now being sold at Tk 38 to 40 per kg, mustard oil at between Tk 40 to 48 per kg. Gram is being sold between Tk 40 to 42 per kg.

Brinjal is being sold between Tk 10 to 12 per kg, potato at Tk 8 per kg, cauliflower at Tk 12 per kg, cabbage at Tk 12 per kg, cluster bin at Tk 20 per kg.

Onion is being sold at Tk 32 per kg and green pepper at Tk 40 per kg.

Ruhi fish is being sold at Tk 100 per kg, hilsha between Tk 120 to 140 per kg, koi at taka 200 per kg, mrigel between Tk 70 to 80 per kg, singi at Tk 200 per kg, tangra at Tk 100 per kg, meat between Tk 120 to 130 per kg, beef at Tk 70 per kg, poultry bird Tk 65 to 90 per kg, sugar at Tk 30 per kg, gram at Tk 30.00 per kg, garlic at Tk 60 per kg and cumin-seed at Tk 280 per kg.

**Our Gopalganj correspondent reports:** Hilsa fish is being sold between Tk 180 and Tk 200 per kilogram (kg), ruhi is being sold between Tk 150 and Tk 180 per kg, magur fish between Tk 130 and Tk 160 per kg, 20 'koi' fishes are selling between Tk 250 and Tk 300 (big size), and other fishes between Tk 90 and Tk 110 per kg.

The price of one kilogram of beef varies from Tk 80 to 85 and one kilogram mutton varies from Tk 120 to Tk 130.

One kg rice is being sold between Tk 14 and 20, one kg flour between Tk 12 and Tk 13, 'Musur' pulse between Tk 34 and Tk 36 per kg, khesari pulse between Tk 20 and Tk 22 per kg, mustered oil between Tk 65 and Tk 70 per kg, sugar between Tk 33 and Tk 35 per kg, molasses per kg between Tk 25 and 26, milk between Tk 20 and 22 per kg and one quartet eggs is now being sold at the price of Tk 15 to 16.

Local businessmen said, prices of daily essentials have registered an increase due to shortage of supply. But reliable sources said, that, dishonest traders indulged in creating artificial crisis in the local markets to make abnormal profit during Ramadan.

Similar reports of soaring iftar items are pouring in from all other districts.

## Water logging may affect rabi farming in Pabna

UNB, Pabna

Cultivation of Rabi crops may face setback in the current season owing to persisting water logging on a vast tract of land in Santhiya upazila of Pabna.

The growers cannot harvest their paddy, as water remained stagnant on 1,500 acres of land of six beels in Dhulauri, Gourigram and Khetupara unions of the upazila.

Most of the paddy fields remained under water and at some places farmers are trying to harvest their paddy using country boat.

It has become difficult for water outlet through the sewerage canal of Water Development Board as a section of fishermen set up nets alongside their bamboo fence blocking water near the canal at Beel Mahiar Char, Baro Gramer Moor, Talpatti, Satani Char, Punduria Bridge for catching fish. Hence, it will take two or three months to clear up the logged water through the canal.

If logged water is not drained out immediately there is no possibility of drying up water of Paikasha, Behula, Dhali, Bhera Gara, Gazaria and Mukthar beels.

At some places, four to five feet water remained stagnant and crops like onion, boro paddy went under water due to the barrier created by the fishermen. It may be noted that the canals were given lease to the

farmers. Ripe paddy would be damaged extensively if the authority does not take immediate steps.

Local farmers said they face such water logging problem every year and demanded of the authorities concerned to take immediate measures to save their standing crops.

## Clash over torturing housewife leaves one dead, 24 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

One person was killed and 24 others were injured in a clash following an incident of beating a housewife by her husband in Chandrakona area of Sirajganj town on Friday.

The incident took place when Abu Taleb beat his wife Sufia Khatun mercilessly on Friday morning. Hearing this news from the victim, father and brothers of the victim beat up Abu Taleb. Later a clash erupted between the supporters of the two groups injuring 25 people.

Critically injured Abu Taleb succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College where he was shifted for treatment.

A case was lodged with Sirajganj Sadar thana in this connection by the family members of Abu Taleb.

## Laxmipur Krishak League leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Laxmipur

President of Laxmipur district Krishak League and chairman of Kushkahi union in Sadar thana Abu Taiob Chowdhury was arrested on Wednesday on charge of attacking and looting a bazaar.

Police arrested Taiob as an accused in a case filed for residing Shantirhat Bazaar before the general election on October 1.

According to police sources, he led a group of Bangladesh Chhatra League workers and attacked the bazaar only two days before the election. They ransacked at least 20 shops and damaged all the furniture in the shops, police alleged.

Most of the owners of the shops were supporters of BNP. Taiob fled the area immediately after the changeover in the government.

## 66 Sirajganj AL, BCL, Jubo League activists jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Three leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) were sent to jail custody and 12 others released on bail after a local court rejected their bail petition on Monday. On Sunday a total of 66 leaders and workers of Bangladesh Awami League (AL) and its front organisations were sent to jail.

The BCL leaders are Aynal Haque, 24, Aslam Uddin, 22, and Sariful Islam, 24.

Court sources said Mizanur Rahman Bablu of Betgari village, a local BNP leader filed a case against 15 AL leaders and workers on September 18 at Kazipur upazila for their alleged involvement in incidents of bomb attacks on the houses of BNP leader Mizanur Rahman's Betgari and his relatives.

Tension heightened in the upazila. Additional police have been deployed in the area.

## BNP factions clash: 10 hurt at Siddhirganj

UNB, N'ganj

A gunfight between two factions of ruling BNP at Pathantali bus stand in Siddhirganj upazila of Narayanganj on Thursday left 10 people injured.

Police and villagers said the clash took place between Maktar group and Babul group of BNP over establishing supremacy in the area.

Both the groups exchanged fire and exploded bombs during the clash that lasted for half an hour.

Traffic movement on Dhaka-Demra road remained suspended for an hour.

Of the injured, bullet-hit Swapan, 25, was sent to Narayanganj hospital.

On information, police rushed to the spot and arrested BNP activists Babul, Selim and Motiar along with a shotgun.

A case was filed with local police in this connection.

## Hundreds of villagers in Manikganj now use sanitary latrine

BSS, Manikganj

Hundreds of rural people, who once lacked sense of hygiene, have now become aware of better healthy life and habituated themselves with low-cost sanitary latrine system in Manikganj.

The homes of almost 90 per cent of the rural poor and middle-income group of Manikganj Sadar upazila have now at least one hygienic latrine each and have safe drinking water facilities although 35 per cent of tubewells of the area are found arsenic contaminated.

While visiting Betia Bazaar and Baghia villages in Sadar upazila recently, a group of journalists saw that efforts were on to bring the rest of the population (10 per cent) of the area under the water and sanitation (WatSan) programme, a programme launched by non-government organisations (NGOs) with the aim of ensuring improved

sanitation and water supply system.

A total of 17 NGOs working in different parts of Manikganj with specific issues like water, sanitation and education have organised WatSan (water and sanitation) Fair 2001 at Betila Bazaar as part of their efforts to stop the use of kutcha latrines and long practice of using open space as toilets.

NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation along with supports from other NGOs, including the Grameen Sheba Sangstha (GSS), organised the three-day WatSan Fair, which took a festive mood as a good number rural people visited it every day.

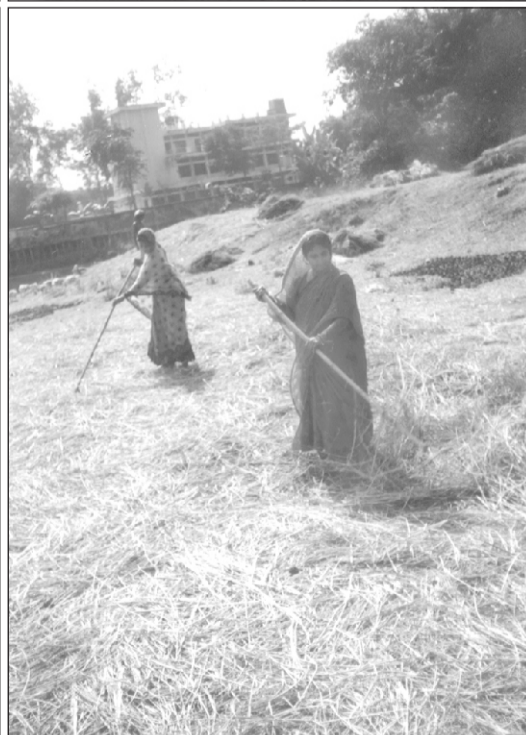
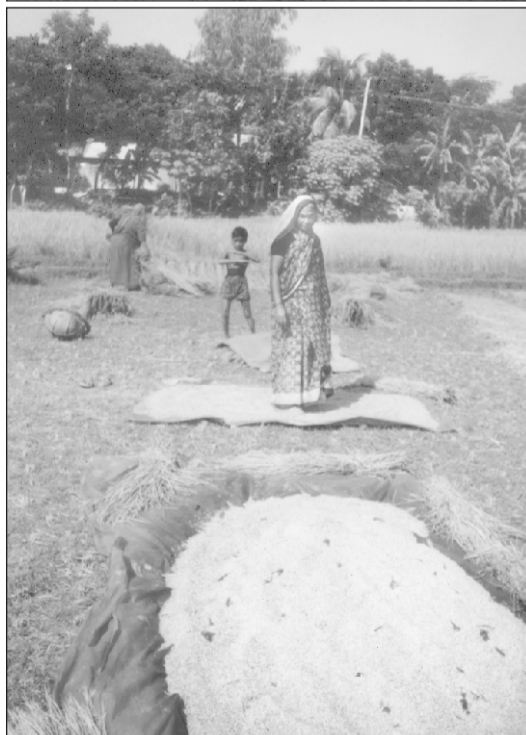
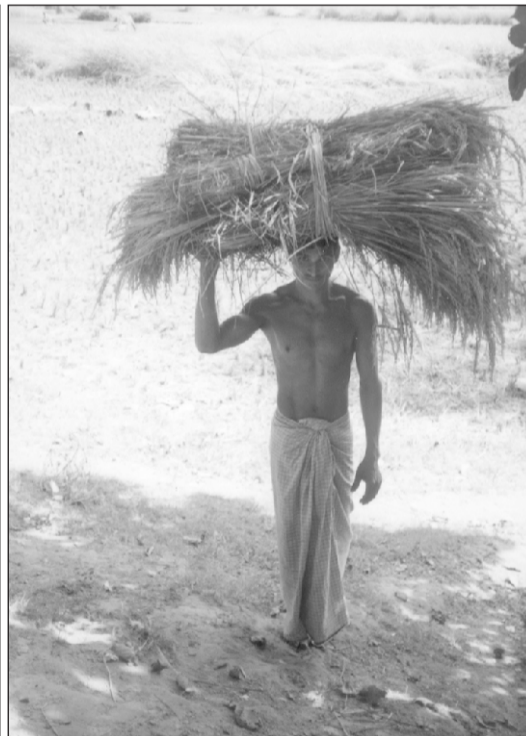
"We have made a tremendous success in equipping almost 90 per cent of the population of Betila-Mitora union with improved sanitary system in the last two years," an activist of GSS told the journalists.

He said out of 303 families in

Baghia, a model village, the GSS and the NGO Forum have provided sanitary latrines at a cost Tk 450 to 550 to most of them. He, however, said the NGOs here are only ensuring easy access to sanitary latrine system.

Mohammad Ashraf Islam of the NGO Forum told the journalists that his organisation was providing supports to local people in two ways. One, he said, is hardware support and the other is software support.

Giving details, he said, the NGO Forum is providing support to identify tubewell waters contaminated with arsenic, make people aware of the poison as well as motivate them not to drink that waters, and provide support to get safe drinking water from alternative sources like rain water, harvesting and use of dug-well water.



FEATURE PHOTO: AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU

Winter brings joy for the farmers because it is the season of paddy harvesting. Growers of Sirajganj have started cutting down ripe paddy from their lands. (Top left-right) Two cultivators cut down their golden crops happily from their field situated behind Sirajganj Circuit House while their fellow peasant carrying home his produce. (Bottom left-right) Farmer's wives drying wet paddy and straw on their field.