

NEWS SNAPS

Diarrhoea claims 7 lives in Habiganj

UNB, Habiganj
An outbreak of diarrhoea in Chunarughat upazila of Habiganj claimed seven lives in last five days.
The victims were identified as Aklima Khatun, 12, and Muslima Khatun, 10, of Lalgher village, Alfa Begum, 3, of Himalia village, Ratan Lal, 45, Shahana Akhter, 26, Aklima, 5, and Jaheda, 40, of Peraranga village. Medical sources said over 200 people across Habiganj were inflicted with the waterborne disease and being treated in different upazila health complexes.

115 affected by arsenic in Shariatpur

UNB, Shariatpur
Arsenic beyond permissible limit has been detected in tubewell waters in two upazilas of Shariatpur threatening the public health.
According to official sources arsenic related diseases so far affected 115 people in Naria and Damudda upazila. But unofficial sources claim that the figure is much higher. Officials said water samples of 4,500 tubewells collected from different areas of Damudda upazila were tested and 1,300 samples were found contaminated with high level of arsenic. In Naria upazila, samples of water taken from 483 tubewells were tested and 305 of those were found contaminated. Local people and officials of Department Public Health Engineering (DPHE) sought urgent steps by the government to combat the arsenic contamination.

Blood donated during Kattayani Puja

UNB, Magura
Members of the Hindu community in Magura town voluntarily donated 50 bags of blood on the occasion of their Kattayani Puja on November 22.
Natin Bazaar Smriti Sangha with the help of civil surgeon office organised the blood donation programme. The donated blood was handed over to the authorities of sadar hospital for its blood bank. The blood would be given to the poor patients free of cost.

Two JCD activists arrested in Sherpur

UNB, Sherpur
Two Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists were arrested from Sherpur town in last three days on charge of extortionism.
The arrested were identified as JCD district vice president Masood Pervez Mukta and joint secretary Enamul Haque Bipu. They are also accused in a number of other cases. Police said Bipu demanded toll from a Jatia Party activist, Ansar Ali, and ransacked his business firm at Tinanibazar in Sherpur town as he refused to give them money Sunday. Mukta as also involved in the incident. Bipu was arrested from his house at Bakrakshar Monday while Mukta from Thana crossing Wednesday.

Two JCD activists held in Barisal

UNB, Barisal
Two activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were arrested from Gouranadi upazila on Monday in connection with the killing of a Chhatra League leader.
Police said JCD activists Nayan Pyada and Anif Hossain were arrested for their suspected involvement in the killing of local Chhatra League leader Shafiqul Islam Bullet. Some armed cadres reportedly belonging to Chhatra Dal beat up Bullet, publicity secretary of Chhatra League on November 20. He later died at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Unknown miscreants abduct man

UNB, Natore
Unknown miscreants abducted a man accused in a dowry case from Natore bus terminal Thursday.
Police said the terrorists picked up Shamsul Islam, 25, of Brichapila village in Gurudaspur upazila at gunpoint while he was returning home after appearing before the court. His father alleged that the plaintiff of the case was involved in the abduction. A case was filed.

400 erosion affected people in distress

UNB, Moulvibazar
Affected by the sudden erosion of the river Monu, some 400 homeless people of Kultura upazila in Moulvibazar are passing hard days since last three months.
Locals said 35 families of village Gazipur of Hajipur union of the upazila were rendered homeless in the erosion caused by a long breach in the flood protection embankment. The distressed people somehow managed to take shelter on the same embankment after losing all their belongings as gushing water washed away their homes. The upazila administration distributed one kg of flattened rice and 100 grams of molasses per head soon after the erosion but no other measures were taken to redress their miseries. The effected people said they do not want relief rather they want permanent and immediate repairing of the embankment so that no further erosion could hit the village.

Barisal Jubo Dal leader expelled

UNB, Barisal
Mahbulul Alam Mehedi, general secretary of Barisal town Jubo Dal, has been expelled temporarily from the party for his alleged involvement in extortion, terrorism and assaulting some party leaders.
General secretary of Jubo Dal Central Committee Goyeshwar Chandra Roy gave the expulsion order on Wednesday. Mehedi has also been asked to reply within 48 hours as to why action would not be taken against him.
Municipal chairman and town BNP president Ahsan Habib Kamal came under attack by Mehedi group in Barisal on Wednesday.

Smuggler with bullets held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Police arrested a smuggler on Monday at Kashiadanga in Rajshahi and recovered 25 bullets from his possession.
The arrested was identified as Sharif, son of late Naosher Ali of Shibganj.
Acting on a tip-off, a special team of Rajshahi Metropolitan police led by SI Mostafa arrested Sharif after raiding a Dhaka-bound bus coming from Chapainawabganj.
Sharif confessed to police that he got the bullets from India and was taking it to Dhaka.

Firearms recovered: Five arrested

UNB, Khulna
Five people were arrested along with four firearms and 10 rounds of bullet from Mohammadpur village of Batiaghata upazila in Khulna on Thursday.
Police said acting on a tip-off, they raided the village and arrested Khokan, 30, Mosarraf Hossain, 22, Robiul Islam, 22, Shaidul Islam, 25, and Rezual, 30. The recovered arms included one gun, one cut-rifle, one foreign made gun and one shutter gun. Arrested Khokan was a cadre of notorious "Halfz Bahini" of Gollamari area of Khulna. A case was filed.

Robbery at Joypurhat BRAC office

UNB, Joypurhat
A robbery was committed at a BRAC office in Akkelpur upazila in Joypurhat recently.
Police said a gang of robbers entered into the NGO office breaking open the collapsible gate and held the inmates hostage on gunpoint. They fled after looting valuables worth over Tk one lakh including one VCP, three bicycles, cash, paddy seeds and medicine. A case was filed with local police.

46 new community clinics to be set up

UNB, Pirojpur
Forty-six community clinics will be set up in Pirojpur this fiscal at a cost of Tk 97 lakh.
Of the clinics, nine each will be set up in Sadar and Nesarabad upazilas while seven each in Bhandaria and Nazirpur, three in Kaukhali and 11 in Mathbaria upazilas by June next. Earlier, 68 community clinics were set up in Pirojpur. Meanwhile Department of Public Health Engineering has undertaken a project to install 180 hand-driven tube-wells in four upazilas of the district. The tube-wells will be installed under a Tk 90 lakh project aiming to ensure arsenic-free drinking water supply. Of the total tubewells, 88 will be sunk in Swarnukathi upazila, seven in Mathbaria, 19 in Bhandaria and 66 in Sadar upazilas by April next.

GK Project incurs Tk 30 cr loss every year

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Ganges-Kabadak (GK) Project, the largest irrigation project in south-western part of the country has failed to fulfill its objective.

Because of absence of proper management, the project has been incurring losses amounting to Tk 30 crore every year from its very inception about 47 years back.

Official sources said, works on the GK project began in 1954 with an ambitious programme in a bid to control flood and provide irrigation facilities to a total of 3.5 lakhs acres land in 13 upazilas of Magura, Jhenidah, Kushtia and Chuadanga districts. But it is a fact that the concerned authorities have been unable to bring the targeted land under its network even after 47 years.

Government took a plan to implement the GK Project in two stages by turn. At the first stage official procedures were finalised while the construction works of the project began at the second stage in 1982-83 financial year.

At that time implementation cost of the project was Tk 73.89 crore. Besides, at the same time 193 km main canal, 400 km branch canal, 907 extraction canal were excavated in the command area of the project



PHOTO: STAR

An abandoned pump house of GK Project in Sreepur upazila of Magura.

for its proper implementation.

A total of 2,184 sluice-gates were also made on those canals. But only became of absence of monitoring and proper management: the project could not fulfill the irrigation target in the command area.

In 1994, Asian Development

Bank (ADB) financed Tk 212.56 crore for the rehabilitation programme of the project which mobilised the GK Project more.

According to the official sources, GK Project Rehabilitation Programme included overhauling of the Bheramara pump-house, repair-

ing of the irrigation canals, installation of modern telecommunication system, power generation centre, mending of road and construction of a regulator at Magura to preserve water for the down stream areas.

Concerned sources said, 2.15 lakh acres of land-out of the targeted 3.5 lakh acres of land were brought under GK project's network which was 64 per cent of the goal.

Meanwhile, after finishing the rehabilitation programme of the GK Project in 1994, activities of the field-level offices in the command area were unexpectedly stopped.

Moreover, there were four subsidiary pumps including a main pump in the command area which possessed power of lifting 5,400 cusec water per second. But the main pump has been disordered for about two years, concerned sources said. As a result, the ambitious GK Project failed to fulfill its goal, whereas, the management cost of the project is still Tk 30 crore every year which is a great loss for the country.

Experts think the new government should take steps to remove mismanagement or abandon the project for saving crore of Taka as government revenue every year.

Uplift works in CHT stopped: 35,000 jobless

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

At least 35,000 people of lower income group people of various professions including day laborers, woodcutters, dock workers have become unemployed due to The suspension of all development works and stagnant situation in procuring and marketing of timbers, the main economic activity of three CHT districts- Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban.

Although the suspension order on development works was lifted last week, but the effectiveness of

the order will not be visible before January next year. Payment of bills of different development works were also suspended due to rift between the CHT Ministry and the three district parisads regarding allocation of money in various projects undertaken by the government.

Moni Swapan Dewan after getting the portfolio of Deputy Minister of CHT Ministry in the BNP-led four party government had ordered to stop funding of all the development projects and appointment of officials in all three districts parisads and the

CHT Development Board.

According to the district administration sources, tenders of some development works were invited as a small amount of money had been allocated at the last moment in the last fiscal, but the CHT ministry suspended allocation of money of those projects. As a result thousands of labourers including 3,000 contractors are now passing hard times.

On the other hand the timber business in the region has been totally collapsed as recently the forest ministry seized Tk 10 crore

of timbers in Chittagong recently with the directive from Jafarul Islam Chowdhury, State Minister of Forest and Environment Ministry.

The timber businessmen are not buying and supplying timbers from CHT after the incidents of seizure of timbers in Chittagong.

The timbers procured from CHT has met the demands of about 80 percents of the country including Chittagong.

The effect of the stagnant situation of economy in the region has fallen severely on all the people of all walks of life.

Jubo Dal, Chhatra Dal create a reign of terror in Barisal

UNB, Barisal

Armed cadres of Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal on Wednesday created a reign of terror in Barisal town over sharing of a tender-work of a road.

Chase and counter-chase, clashes and trading of gunshots between the supporters of Mehedi group and Zahid Group rocked the divisional town creating panic among the townsfolk.

Some three people were injured during the melee that erupted in the morning when the two sides went to work on Alekanda-Bogra road leaving a man injured.

The municipality under medium town-infrastructure development project has been repairing the road involving Tk 39 lakh.

At one stage, the supporters of Mehedi group went on rampage and manhandled a BNP leader Abdul Kader Shikder after they did not find the municipal chairman at his office.

They also attacked chairman Ahsan Habib at court premises. He took shelter at the office of the additional district and sessions judge to save his life.

Later the supporters of the chairman stabbed a cadre of

Mehedi group, Monir, on Sadar road in the town.

On information, the followers of Mehedi attacked some shops and houses at Sadar Road and Agarpur area and fired 5-6 rounds of bullet.

Police rushed to the spot and dispersed the rioters by resorting to heavy baton charge. They also arrested six people in connection with the attack.

Two killed in road mishap

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two motorcycle passengers were crushed to death under the wheels of a speeding truck at Alhaz intersection of Isshardi Highway in Pabna on Wednesday morning.

The victims were identified as Yusuf, 55 and Alauddin, 35. Pabna Police said that motor cycle passenger Alauddin died at the spot when a truck, coming from opposite direction run over the motor cycle at around 11 am at Alhaj intersection. Yusuf was rushed to Isshardi hospital and he took his last breath there. Police seized the killer truck.



PHOTO: STAR

Members of Chittagong University Debating Society parade the streets of Chittagong in a procession demanding ban on use of children in election campaigns.