

NEWS SNAPS

230 arsenic patients detected in Noakhali

UNB, Noakhali
Arsenic beyond permissible limit was detected in the water of over 2000 tubewells in nine unions of sadar upazila of Noakhali. Locals said 230 arsenic patients were identified in the upazila. However, according to unofficial estimation the number of arsenic affected people is over 4,000. Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) sources said arsenic was first detected in water of 175 tubewells in April 1998 at Oshwadia village. The department set up 18 arsenic free tubewells in eight villages of the nine unions. A local NGO tested waters of 24,000 tubewells of sadar upazila last year and arsenic was detected in water of 2,000 tubewells which were sealed off. Panicked by the arsenic contamination, people started to drink pond and river water and were affected by waterborne diseases.

Killing of Jubo League leader condemned

BSS, Netrakona
Leaders of BNP Netrakona district unit in a joint statement on Saturday condemned the killing of Sawpan Jowarder, president of Netrakona district unit of Awami Jubo League, by unidentified gunmen in Netrakona last Wednesday night. They expressed their deep shock and sympathy to the members of the bereaved family. "BNP never believed in the politics of killing and terrorism. We are demanding exemplary punishment for the killers of Jowarder," the statement said. Signatories to the statement are president of BNP Netrakona district unit Asrafuddin Khan, vice president of the unit Abdul Mannan, general secretary Abu Taher Talukder, organising secretary Advocate Mafijul Haque, office secretary Safiqul Kader Suja and president of Netrakona District Jubo Dal Al Amin Khan.

Incidents of robbery on alarming rise

UNB, Khagrachhari
Incidents of robbery at Alutilla on Khagrachhari-Chittagong highway are on alarming rise causing concern among the local people. At least five such incidents were recorded in last week including recent mugging of a medical representative. A group of armed men way laid Chandan Kumar Dey, representative of Refco Laboratory while he was returning to Khagrachhari from Rangamati at 3pm on Saturday and looted all his belongings including medicines and Tk 15,000 in cash. Police said most of the mugging incidents are not reported but they have increased the patrolling on the highway.

Kothin Chibor Dan festival concludes

UNB, Khagrachhari
The two-day long festival of Kothin Chibor Dan concluded at Alok Nobograha Dhatuchoyta Buddhahilhar in the outskirts of Khagrachhari town on Friday. A large number of people of all ages and from far flung areas gathered at the venue to attend the festival of the three hill districts. The programmes included Panchashil Grohon, Sanghadan, Budhabandona, hoisting of national flags and Buddha puja. A discussion meeting was also held on the occasion. Bihar principal Chandramoni Mohasthabir presided over the meeting while District Council Chairman Jatindralal Tripura attended it as chief guest. The festival ended with Propip puja and fireworks in the evening.

Call to preserve wildlife in Bandarban

BSS, Bandarban
State Minister for Environment and Forest Zafrul Islam Chowdhury, who is also in charge of Bandarban district on Saturday urged the concerned officials to turn Bandarban into an attractive recreation centre by preserving the wildlife and increasing its scenic beauty. The minister said this while addressing a meeting on development and law and order of Bandarban at the conference room of the deputy commissioner. District BNP president Nay Sa De, deputy commissioner, police super and district officials were present.

Rice sanctioned for uplift schemes

UNB, Dinajpur
Government has sanctioned 1,137 metric tons of rice under rural infrastructure development programme in 13 upazilas and five municipalities of Dinajpur. Official sources said the rice would be utilised for implementing uplift schemes including construction and reconstruction of roads, bridges and culverts, excavation and re-excavation of derelict ponds and earth filling under the Test Relief scheme. Of the total rice, 105 mts were sanctioned for Sadar, 97 mts for Birol, 64 mts for Bochaganj, 60 mts for Ghoraghat, 55 mts for Hakimpur, 106 mts each for Chirir Bandar and Birganj, 67 mts for Fulbari, 70 mts for Kaharol, 72 mts for Khansama, 110 mts for Parbatipur and 64 mts for Birampur and 87 mts for Nabaganj upazilas. Besides, 40 mts were allotted for Sadar municipality, 7 mts each for Fulbari and Birampur municipalities, 11 mts for Setaganj and 9 mts for Nabaganj municipalities.

Farm loans for farmers

UNB, Pirojpur
Bangladesh Krishi Bank (KKB) and a number of commercial banks are distributing farm loans among the farmers to give a further boost to farm output. The commercial banks are Sonali Bank, Agrani Bank and Janata Bank. Official sources said KKB will disburse Tk 17 crore while Sonali Bank Tk 1.95 crore, Agrani Bank 1.40 crore and Janata Bank Tk 54.50 lakh.

Hard days for Vocational Instt teachers

UNB, Bandarban
Some 15 teachers and employees of Bandarban Textile Vocational Institute in Bandarban have been passing their days in great hardship for non-payment of their salary for the last eight months. Institute sources said 15 teachers and employees joined in May this year. But none of them could draw their salary, as the Finance Ministry did not send the necessary documents to the local treasury yet. They have already knocked the door of the Finance Ministry many times but did not receive any answer from them. In this condition, the future of the students of the Textile Vocational Institute has become uncertain as most of the teachers are thinking to resign from their jobs.

Extensive pulse farming programme

UNB, Kishoreganj
An extensive programme has been taken up to cultivate pulse across the country under nine agricultural zones in the current Rabi season. According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources, 60,000 hectares of land have been brought under the farming with a production target of about 37,000 metric tons. Of the total land, 1,300 hectares would be cultivated in seven districts of Dhaka zone, 1400 hectares in five districts of Mymensingh zone, 800 hectares in seven districts of Comilla zone, 5,000 hectares in four districts of Chittagong zone. Besides, 100 hectares would be cultivated in two districts of Rangamati zone, 37,800 hectares in 11 districts of Barisal zone, 300 hectares in eight districts of Rajshahi zone, 6,300 hectares in 10 districts of Jessore zone and 7,000 hectares in eight districts of Rangpur zone.

Loan distributed among youths

BSS, Faridpur
The local youth development office has so far disbursed over Tk two crore among 2265 trainees as youth loans. A meeting organised on Sunday on the occasion of youth day was also told that over Tk 10 crore has been disbursed among 4,648 poor families under the poverty alleviation programme in Charbhadrasan and Sadarpur. The meeting was presided over by Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf. Later, the minister also attended a function organised to create public awareness regarding AIDS disease on the occasion of AIDS day.

Killer gets 10-year RI in absentia

UNB, Kishoreganj
A court in Kishoreganj on Thursday sentenced a man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) in absentia for killing his father-in-law. The Additional District and Sessions Judge Court also fined the convict, Abul Kalam Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer one year more RI. According to the prosecution story, Abul Kalam hacked to death his father-in-law Sultanuddin at a village in Katadi upazila on March 12, 1996. After investigation police submitted chargesheet against three people. Kalam went into hiding after the killing. Judge Nirmol Chowdhury found Kalam guilty and handed down the judgement acquitting two others.

Highway robber arrested

UNB, Madaripur
A notorious highway robber was arrested from Ghatakchar Bazar in Sadar upazila of Madaripur on Saturday. Police said Rabiul, 35, had been involved in most of the highway robberies and accused of a number of murder cases including the murder of his own daughter and comrade Lal Khan. A case was filed.



PHOTO: A K M MOHSIN

Childhood in rural Bangladesh
A tiny boy swinging holding the branch of a tree somewhere in a rural area of Manikganj. Usually rural children in our country grow up playing with nature. They also learn a lot from nature.

RU distributes 1,63,000 admission forms

RU CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Faculty of Law, only one Department of Law for 100 seats. A total of 1,63,000 admission forms have been distributed among the admission seekers for the first year honours course of 2001-2002 session in Rajshahi University this year. The number of seats is 3118. About 98.09 per cent applicants will not be able to admit themselves in the university for want of seats. It is revealed that 53 students will vie for each seat while the ratio in last year was about 28.6. The number of applications sold this year is the highest in last five years. A total of 6,000 forms have been submitted to the Department of Management, 9500 to the Department of Finance and Banking, 7000 to the Department of Accounting and 6,200 to the Department of the Marketing in the Commerce Faculty. A total of 7,916 forms have been submitted to the Faculty of Social Science, 12,690 to the Faculty of Biology and Mining, 5,760 to the Faculty of Agriculture, 25,000 to the Faculty of Arts, 44,076 to the Science Faculty and 1,504 forms for the special quota. In seven faculties the highest number of (44,076) forms has been submitted to in the Science Faculty against 705 seats. About 88 students will vie for one seat in the Agriculture Faculty. A total of 5,960 forms has been submitted against 65 seats in the Faculty. The university authority earned Tk 1,22,25,000. The admission test for 43 departments in seven faculties will begin from January 13 next year.

Guest birds arriving in Sunamganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Sunamganj
are hundreds of islets and water bodies in this region such as, Tangua Beel, Pashua Beel and Chatidara beel where the guest birds have been coming daily for food and shelter. Tangua Beel, the largest water body of the country which has been declared 'Ramsar area' is extended over Taherpur upazila, Dharampasha upazila and Madhyannagar. Thousands of migratory birds have been taking shelter in the Tangua areas. Ducks, black ducks and other birds have been coming to this region for refuge. The birds will return home after the winter. However, despite ban on hunting of guest birds, some unscrupulous people have been hunting guest birds in Sunamganj. Professional and amateur bird hunters have become very active here and they are hunting guest birds indiscriminately using guns, hooks, nets, current nets and other traps. Almost every day some professional hunters are found all over Sunamganj town along with cages full of different species of guest birds meant for sale. Some members of law enforcing agencies are also seen buying the birds instead of taking legal action against the unscrupulous hunters.

People of Satkhira celebrate Dec 7 as deliverance day

ABU AHMED, Satkhira
People of Satkhira celebrate December 7 as the deliverance day. On this day, in the early morning, Satkhira town was liberated from the clutch of Pakistan occupation forces without any bloodshed. The enemy forces retreated towards Jessore and Khulna after vacating Satkhira town as well as other areas of Satkhira the previous night. It was indeed a surprise to all. On December 6, the Pakistan occupation army were forced to retreat from Satkhira due to heavy resistance build up by the freedom fighters and on December 7 the freedom fighters marched into the Satkhira town triumphantly and hoisted the national flag of Bangladesh at the Satkhira court premises. So, December 6th and 7th are two red letter days in our history of Liberation War of 1971. Freedom fighters had to fight valiantly many battles in which they sacrificed their lives for the cause of independence. It was April 19, 1971. As soon as the sun set, the Pakistani occupation Army entered into Satkhira town through Jessore road and took Shelter in the town high school building. In the meantime, fighting scattered throughout the countryside. It was thought by many that Pak Army would not attack the border town of Satkhira and considering Satkhira a safer place, many people from different areas of the country, in fear of life, had taken shelter in Satkhira. On the following day the Pak Army attacked and killed about 1,500 innocent people who took shelter in the high school building of the town and buried them in mass graves in the residential area of Dinesh Karmakar near the school. On the following night the Pak Army, in collaboration with their local agents chalked out plans for future offences. The next morning the enemy blew up the house of Kazi of Kachhavi para by charging dynamite and later killed Kazi Mosrur Ahmed (Captain Kazi) along with his brother-in-law by charging bayonet. Kazi Mosrur Ahmed was one of the Chief organisers of liberation war in Satkhira. After some days of Kazi's death the enemy opened fire indiscriminately on a large number of people, who in fear of life, were fleeing to India. Over 2000 people, most of them children and women met the tragic end of their lives near Jhowdanga Bazaar in Sadar upazila. The massacre was a sad one indeed. In the meantime, freedom fighters were being organised to build resistance against any attack of the enemy. From the first week of March preparations were going on for armed struggle against the Pak regime in Satkhira. In the early hour of the December 6, 1971 freedom fighters attacked the Pak occupation forces at Satkhira town. After a fierce fighting the enemy forces retreated towards Jessore and Khulna. On December 7, the freedom fighters, in groups, from all sides entered Satkhira town in triumphant processions. They hoisted the national flag of Bangladesh at Satkhira court building premises and Satkhira was finally liberated.

Steps for smooth irrigation system during boro farming

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore
Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) has taken up necessary steps for smooth irrigation system during the current boro cultivation season in northern Bangladesh. BPC has already set up a control cell in Bogra for well and proper distribution and smooth marketing of diesel in this region considering the increasing demand during previous years. BPC has targeted selling 3.31 lakh metric tons of fuel in the region this season. Adequate diesel and lubricants have been stored at seven depots to ensure fuel supply. The oil marketing companies of Padma, Meghna and Jamuna will supply the fuel. Cultivation of boro totally depends on irrigation. Seven months, November to May, are considered to be the peak season of irrigation season. One-third of the total demand of diesel in the country during boro season are used in the northern region. About 12.53 lakh hectares of land will be brought under boro cultivation in 16 districts of the region this season. At least 40,000 power tillers and 4,00,000 irrigation machines are expected to run in this period.