

## NEWS SNAPS

## Anthrax panic grips Pabna town

UNB, Pabna

Anthrax panic struck the dwellers of Pabna town on Sunday with information spread about a letter containing white powder mailed to the chairman of Pabna Press Club.

The letter read "stop terrorism and torture on countrywide women and minority group, if not resist terrorism only anthrax virus will be solution." Sender's address was given as Grameen Phone Information Centre, Gulshan, Dhaka. Later, police seized the letter along with white powder and sent those to the laboratory in Mohakhali, Dhaka for test.

## Rickshaw-puller killed in bus mishap

UNB, Naogaon

A rickshaw-puller was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus in Naogaon town on Naogaon-Santahar road on Monday.

Police and witnesses said the victim identified as Sahjahan, 30, died on the spot when a Bogra-bound bus ran over him near the fire service office. Following the incident some angry rickshaw-pullers put up barricade on the road. Later local administration brought the situation under control. A case was filed.

## Two including JCD leader arrested

UNB, Narayanganj

Two people, including a leader of BNP's student wing JCD, were arrested on Sunday night from a supermarket in Narayanganj town on charge of toll collection.

Police said they arrested Mazharul Islam alias Joseph, president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal town unit, and Kailla Ripon when they along with their associates went to Joyal Plaza for extorting toll. They fired several shots when police laid siege to the market being tipped off by shopkeepers. However, police overpowered them without firing any shots and took them into custody. They were also wanted in several other cases. The other miscreants fled the scene. A case was filed.

## Two trains collide in Brahmanbaria

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Two slow moving trains collided near Mandabag railway station in Kasba upazila of Brahmanbaria resulting in injuries to 10 persons.

Railway officials said wrong signaling caused the accident when the engine of one train and a bogey of another were derailed on Dhaka-Chittagong line. Both were local trains, one bound for Chandpur from Bhairab and the other for Bhairab from Chandpur. Those injured were given treatment in clinics nearby. Train services were not disrupted as the salvage train soon cleared the line.

## 'Boro' cultivation on 7,600 hectares

UNB, Rangamati

Department of Agriculture Extension has taken up a scheme to bring 7,600 hectares of land under boro farming in nine upazilas of Rangamati with a production target of 23,180 mts paddy this season.

DAE has also decided to provide fertiliser and BR-28, 29 and 36 varieties of seeds among the farmers to make the programme a success. Farmers will also be imparted training on cultivating the land in scientific methods. A total of 30 demonstration plots will be set up and one and a half mts of seeds will be produced from each plot. Agriculture department is giving necessary instructions to the farmers to cultivate BR-28 and 29 varieties on their land in order to achieve optimum production.

## Rice, paddy procurement drive begins

UNB, Thakurgaon

The rice and paddy procurement drive began in Thakurgaon on Friday. Secretary of the Food Ministry Abdul Latif Mondal inaugurated the drive at the food godown premises in Sadar upazila. Director General of Food AKM Nurul Afsar attended the function as special guest while deputy commissioner ATM Zulfikar Haider Chowdhury presided. Some 5,245 metric tons of rice and 11,114 metric tons of paddy would be procured in Thakurgaon during the current aman season, officials said. Over 1.09 lakh mts of paddy and 99,420 mts of rice would be procured in Rajshahi division, they added.

## Body of unidentified youth recovered

UNB, Bogra

The body of an unidentified youth was recovered from a paddy field at Koichar village in Sadar upazila of Bogra on Saturday.

Police suspected that some unknown assailants strangled the victim, 30. The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy. A UD case was filed.



STAR PHOTO

Eid shopping by some college students in Mymensingh town. As the greatest festival of Muslims nears Eid shopping gradually gains momentum in this district town.

Academic deadlock at IU  
Students face bleak future

RAHAT AHMED, Kusthia

Students of Islamic University (IU) have been facing a bleak future due to an academic deadlock in the university.

This has been created due to vacancies in top posts including that of vice chancellor (VC) and treasurer for a long time.

An administrative deadlock has already been prevailing following exit of immediate past VC of the university Prof Lutfor Rahman who resigned on November 3 under pressure of BNP and Jamaat teachers.

Besides, the posts of treasurer, proctor and student advisor have been lying vacant for a long time. Because of the vacancies an academic deadlock coupled with administrative deadlock has worsened the situation.

According to the Islamic University Act, the vice chancellor shall be appointed by the chancellor for a period of four years on such terms and condition as the chancellor may determine. Secondly, at any time when the vice chancellor is absent or is unable to perform the functions of his office due to illness or some other cause, the chancellor shall make such arrangements for the performance of the functions of the vice chancellor as he may deem fit.

The vacant posts are not being fulfilled due to contradictory lobbying by BNP and Jamaat supported teachers.

At present about 600 files both administrative and

academic are being held up for signature of the Islamic University vice chancellor. The situation has caused sufferings of 871 teachers, officers and employees of the university.

Files regarding promotion, grading, upgrading and appointment have been held up due to lack of VC's signature.

Salaries of teachers, officers and employees of the university including festival allowances for the Eid have become uncertain.

Besides the admission test of first year honours classes scheduled to be held from December 27 have become also uncertain due to absence of VC.

New schedule for examinations can not be possible without VC's consent.

As a result students of the university will face a massive session jam.

It is worth mentioning that a session jam of three and a half years has been reduced to one year only due to the sincere effort of the immediate past VC Prof Lutfor Rahman.

Results of honours final year, masters and year final of each department have been delayed due to lack of VC's signature.

Besides, all the development programmes of university have been postponed due to absence of VC.

Islamic University Officers' Association (IUOA) secretary Nawab Ali told The Daily Star "We are waiting for a quick solution to IU crisis".



PHOTO: STAR

Minister for Land M Shamsul Islam and State Minister for Textiles Mijanur Rahman Sinha attend a discussion meeting and 'iftar mahfil' of Munshiganj Jubo Dal at Maulana Bhasani Auditorium as chief guest and special guest while general secretary of Jubo Dal Gaeswar Roy and M Abdul Hai MP are also seen.

## Police remain inactive despite increase in mugging

UNB, Manikganj

Number of mugging and robbery incidents on Dhaka-Aricha highway has increased recently ahead of holy Eid festival.

It is alleged that police remained inactive mysteriously despite the increasing mugging and robbery on the highway.

The victims said the hooligans in guise of passengers have been taking the opportunity to loot belongings from the bus passengers by making them senseless after offering them intoxicant substance mixing food.

## Vested quarter under shelter of BNP leaders occupying govt property

UNB, Magura

With the change of the government a vested quarter under the active shelter of local ruling party leaders is trying to grab the government property across Magura district.

Local officials wishing anonymity said with the change of the government the illegal ownership of the government property is shifting to new occupants.

Once Awami League activists occupied government staff quarters and khas land but now BNP men are trying to take control over these depriving the government from huge revenue annually.

Local Water Development Board at Shailakupa is going to take action against influential Awami League leaders who had occupied 61 quarters of the staff of the board for the last five years and left these after the taking over of caretaker government.

The board has already issued notices demanding Tk 50 lakh from the illegal occupants as rent and other charges. Meanwhile the board became bill defaulter of electricity and WASA.

Power Development Board (PDB) has already disconnected electricity of the quarters, as the bills amounting to Tk 11 lakh remained unpaid since long.

These quarters were constructed for the officers and employees of the board between 1965 and 1970 but a small number of officers and staffs resided in these quarters.

Taking the advantage of vacancy, the illegal occupants captured these under the shelter of different political parties. Besides, some teachers and government officials other than water board staff used to utilise these quarters.

Soon after the take over of office by the caretaker government in July the illegal occupants left the quarter leaving a huge amount of electricity and water bill unpaid. A number of UP chairmen and bank officials were included in the list of illegal occupants.

While the Board officials are trying to collect the dues of rent from the illegal occupants of last five years, a vested quarter under the umbrella of ruling party are keeping the room under lock and key which were already locked by the authorities.

Besides, a ruling party activist has captured the government land in front of Sadar hospital. Local MP Mashiur Rahman while talking to the journalists recently express annoyance over the incident.

He directed the hospital authorities to evict the illegal occupants but no action was taken yet.

## 5,690 ponds in Narail need proper maintenance

UNB, Narail

About 4,786 metric tons of fishes worth about Tk 32 crore could be produced every year if some 5,690 ponds lying utilised in Narail are brought under pisciculture.

According to reports, over 5,690 small and big ponds and tanks have been lying idle in three upazilas of Narail for years together due to the negligence and lack of proper main-

tenance.

Most of the ponds and tanks are owned by the government and those have been silted up. Besides, a large number of ponds and tanks are full of water hyacinths disrupting fish cultivation in those water bodies.

Some fish cultivators told that if the concerned authorities take appropriate steps to re-excavate the ponds and tanks, and introduce scientific method of fish cultivation

by arranging training for fish cultivators and extending adequate loan facilities, fish production would substantially increased.

They said supply of improved varieties of fish fries like ruhit, katla, silver carp, grass carp, mrigel, and magur could help raise fish production.

It is learnt that the annual demand of fish across the district is 14,224 metric tons.

## Unabated smuggling of Indian goods worth crores of taka thru' Jamuna bridge

AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj

On the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr Indian goods including saree and cosmetics worth crores of taka are being smuggled into the capital city of Dhaka and other parts of the country through Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge.

The smuggling has been going on unabated due to toll collection of a few members of police and truck workers. Even after seizure of Indian contrabands by policemen, they did not deposit the same to government godowns, rather they sold those in black markets and earned good profit.

It is worth mentioning that a thana and two police camps have been established in the Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge area within 20 kilometres area to recover illegal Indian goods and also to maintain law and order in the bridge area. One police sergeant and 15 armed policemen have been appointed in each camp while the charge of the thana has been given to an inspector along with 35 armed policemen. The police

super of Sirajganj supervises them. The on-duty officers and cops only harass innocent bus passengers and recover huge Indian goods and sell those at black markets, sufferers have alleged.

Sergeant Nabi Hossain in collaboration with Bangabandhu Bridge Officer-in-Charge (OC) sieged a truck bearing number Dhaka Metro TA 2327 on Wednesday containing Indian saree worth one crore taka. The truck came from Iswardi. It is a mystery that on the same day a micro-bus containing essential commodity and Indian saree was set free in exchange for a good amount of money.

It has been revealed that illegal Indian contrabands are allegedly loaded in trucks at Iswardi while those are plied to Dhaka and other parts of the country regularly via Shahjadpur, Ullapara and Sholonga. Officers-in-Charge (Ocs) of the aforementioned places, one sergeant and the OC of Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge thana help smuggle in these goods in exchange for a huge amount of money.

## Smuggling on alarming rise in Thakurgaon

UNB, Thakurgaon

Smuggling is on alarming rise in different frontier areas of northern districts of the country including Thakurgaon ahead of holy Eid-ul-Fitr.

Indian contraband items have flooded the markets of the country and these are being smuggled into the country in huge quantity with impunity every day with the conniv-

ance of the law enforcing agencies.

Haripur, Baliadangi, Pirganj, Ranisangkail border of Thakurgaon district, Hili, Birampur, Biral, Fulbari, Parbatipur, Sadar border of Dinajpur district and Atoari, Tetulia border of Panchagarh are safe routes for smuggling.

Consequently sugar, salt, clothes, heroin, phensidyl cattle and other goods are being smuggled into the country through these

border areas everyday.

Targeting the Eid a section of unscrupulous traders have become active and storing these goods in their own storehouses. Hundreds of men, women and children are involved with the illegal business.

The local elite called upon the government to take steps to check the increasing smuggling by forming a special task force without further delay.