

NEWS SNAPS

Outlaw gunned down in Jhenidah

UNB, Jhenidah
An outlaw was gunned down at a village in Shailakupa upazila of Jhenidah Saturday night.

According to a delayed report, gunmen stormed into the house of the victim, Tuku, 35, an activist of the outlawed Biplobi Communist Party, at Jadabpur village at dead of night. They dragged him out of his house and killed him on a nearby road. Tuku, wanted by police in the Mintu and Gani murder cases, was believed to have been killed by his rival group. A case was filed.

AL activist succumbs to injuries

UNB, Jhenidah
An Awami League (AL) activist of Shailakupa upazila in Jhenidah, who was injured in a clash with BNP men a day after Eid, died in Magura hospital on Sunday.

Police said Abdul Razzak, chairman of Bahadurpur union and local Awami League leader, was arrested following a case filed against him after the clash between two rival groups of people on Saturday. The chairman who also faces 10 other cases, was produced before court and then sent to jail the following day.

Bank official killed in road accident

UNB, Joypurhat
A bank official was killed in a road accident at Khasbagauri in Panchbibi upazila in Joypurhat on Joypurhat-Panchbibi road on Monday.

Police said Akhteruzzaman, 45, a Sonali Bank official, was critically injured when a lorry hit his motorbike while he was returning from Panchbibi to Joypurhat. He was rushed to Joypurhat Modern Hospital where he died from his injuries. Police seized the lorry, but the driver fled the scene.

UP chairman of Bheramara UZ arrested

UNB, Kushtia
A Union Parishad (UP) chairman of Bheramara upazila in Kushtia was arrested from Kuchiamora Bazar Sunday night in connection with a clash.

Police said Akhteruzzaman, chairman of Bahadurpur union and local Awami League leader, was arrested following a case filed against him after the clash between two rival groups of people on Saturday. The chairman who also faces 10 other cases, was produced before court and then sent to jail the following day.

Armed pirates kidnap hatchery employee

UNB, Satkhira
Armed pirates from the Sundarbans kidnaped a hatchery employee from Jatindranagar village in Shyamnagar of Satkhira on Friday and demanded a ransom of Tk two lakh.

Locals said a gang of terrorists, numbering 15, picked up Muhib Gazi, 30, from the hatchery of Abul Kashem and demanded Tk two lakh for his release. They threatened to kill him unless their demand for ransom is met within a week. On the same day, sea robbers looted equipment of solar power generation and other valuables from a trawler of another hatchery in the neighbourhood.

Pabna lawyers boycott judge court

UNB, Pabna
Lawyers boycotted Pabna Judge Court Tuesday following a disagreement with the judge over fixing of dates for hearing of 15 important criminal cases.

Court sources said the lawyers boycotted the court as Judge Abdul Matin went on vacation without announcing next dates for hearing the cases as requested by Pabna Bar Association president Zahir Ali Quaderi and general secretary M A Matin. The lawyers also held an emergency meeting demanding appointment of a new judge.

Seven policemen including ASI closed

UNB, Manikganj
Seven policemen, including an ASI of naval police posted at Shibhalaya thana in Aricha ghat, were closed for releasing a truck carrying smuggled goods.

The cops were identified as Shamim, Majed, Rabiul, Keramat, Hashmat, Babul and ASI Rowshan Ali. Official source said the cops seized the truck along with illegal Indian goods at Arichaghat Sunday night and released it following an underhand deadline. As the matter brought to the notice of the district police administration, they closed the policemen.

Extortionists attack sex workers

UNB, Magura
Five sex workers were injured in an attack on a warehouse in Magura town by extortionists early Monday.

Police said Iqbal, son of Bakufakir of Niznanduali village, went to the brothel to extort toll from a sex worker, Rokeya, on Sunday, but Rokeya turned down his demand. Angered by the refusal, Iqbal along with his 10 associates attacked the brothel, leaving the five sex workers injured and their valuables ransacked.

Two activists of UPDF arrested

UNB, Khagrachhari
Two activists of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) were arrested along with arms and ammunition from Baroitailin Guimara of Khagrachhari on Tuesday.

Acting on a tip-off, army men raided the area at about 3 pm and caught Pijush Chakma, 28, and Usha Marna, 23, and recovered a 3.3 rifle, two revolvers, one SBBJ gun, 259 rounds of bullet, seven magazines and other valuable documents from their possession. The arrested, who claimed themselves as UPDF activists, were handed over to police along with the arms and ammunition. Meanwhile, UPDF activists allegedly abducted a PCJSS worker, Chinu Chakma 35, from a house at Shantipur village in Dighinala upazila Monday. PCJSS leader said the UPDF activists also beat up another man, Bimol Kanti Chakma, during the incident.

BKB loan from Magura farmers

UNB, Magura
Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has taken up a programme to distribute loan amounting to Tk 15.17 crore among farmers of Magura this fiscal.

BKB sources said the loan is being distributed among the farmers for crop cultivation, poultry and fish farming, purchasing irrigation equipment and bullocks, and launching small business. The bank distributed Tk 5.6 crore in last five months of the current fiscal through its 17 branches. It also realised Tk 12 crore outstanding loans from the farmers during the period.

438 uplift projects progressing

UNB, Bogra
Some 438 development projects are being implemented in Bogra at a cost of Tk 41.89 crore.

The projects include construction of 160 kms of roads, 60 metres of bridges and culverts, union parishad bhobans and upazila land offices in addition to a small water supply project and development and maintenance of rural infrastructure. The government has so far allocated Tk 39.84 crore for the projects and work on 91 projects has already been completed, officials said.



PHOTO: STAR

Artistes rendering patriotic songs at a cultural function organised by Faridpur Zila Shilpakala Academy in Faridpur on the occasion of Victory Day on December 16.

340 killed by man-eaters in Sundarbans in 10 years

KAZI AMANULLAH, KHULNA

Three hundred forty persons were killed and more than 900 injured in attacks by man-eaters of the Sundarbans in 10 years.

Most of the victims were fishermen, Bawalis, wood cutters and honey-collectors who entered into the forest in large number to earn their living. Most of the injured lost their physical ability to work as was learnt from different sources of both east and west wings of the Sundarbans Forest Division (SFD). At least 400 of the injured were suffering from physical deformity.

According to officials of different Range offices of SFD, man-eaters lie in wait in the areas of forest where honey collectors, wood cutters and Bawalis move about and around. Their careless movement into different places of the forest gave wide scope to tigers to attack. Tiger attack their prays, particularly when collectors of honey look at

bee-hives.

Many bodies of persons killed by tigers could never be recovered. Besides, total number of cows and goats killed by man-eaters stood at more than 1,500 in the villages adjoining the Sundarbans during the last 10 years.

Of course, many tigers were also killed by angry villagers during the same period, said officials of the Sundarbans Forest Division (SFD). Angry people use guns and other deadly weapons when a tiger enters into locality.

As per rule, forest guards must be informed when man-eater enters into locality. It is the bounden duty of forest guards to subdue a man-eater by using tranquiliser music for sending it back to forest. But forest guards are never given this chance, said a Forest Ranger who expressed grave concern over rise in loss of human lives due to attack by man-eaters.

Cold wave paralyzes life in Sirajganj

AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj

Unprecedented cold wave during the last few days has almost paralysed life in Sirajganj town.

Severe cold wind coming from the Himalayas has made lives of the dwellers, specially the homeless people of this small town miserable. At least five elderly men died and many were attacked with various cold related disease.

Intensity of cold worsens after mid-day which turns extremely unbearable in the evening. Everyday, fog clouds the town until 8 to 9 am and vehicles ply in the streets with their headlights still on. Although the sun appears for a while at around 10 am, but it soon disappears to the dismay of the dwellers.

On Friday morning, drizzles made things even more worse. Destitutes try to combat this bitter cold wave through heat generated from burning heaps of straws and old rubber tyres.

On the other hand, second hand warm cloth sellers are making best use of this situation earning handsomely by raising the prices two and even three times.

Diseases like fever, cough, cold and dysentery have also alarmingly increased. The only government

hospital is crowded with bronchitis and asthma patients. But the hospital is short of oxygen and do not have the "litolizer machine." As a result distress and sufferings of the patients know no bounds. The owners of medicine pharmacies are also making good use of this abnormal situation have doubled prices of life saving "salbutamol inhalers."

Severity of cold in this small district town situated near the Jamuna river side is usually bitter than other areas of the country. The situation usually deteriorates in January and February. Observers feel that this cold will worsen further during next few weeks. Cultivation of winter crops, particularly potato is facing damage from this unnatural coldness.

Although some voluntary organisations have come forward with warm clothes for distribution among the destitutes, but this is extremely meagre compared to requirements. Authoritative sources believe unless the government and the rich section of the country come forward with arrangement for distribution of sufficient warm clothes for the homeless people in this area, possibility of loss of life from this bitter and severe cold may not be ignored.

People here are crowding winter garment shops. Sellers display varieties of warm clothes in shops. Many vendors are also selling garments including old ones, on footpaths and in public places. A large number of makeshift shops have also sprung up on S S Road in Jam-e-Mosque, Station Road, Court premises and Bahirgola areas. But prices are comparatively high this year, local residents said. "People of low-income group are flocking shops which sell old warm garments", said Sukur Ali, a resident in the district headquarters.

One housewife was killed by her husband and the husband also committed suicide the similar way at Khorbona village in Boalia thana recently.

The dead husband and wife were identified as Ekram Hossain, 35, and Baby Begum, 28.

Local people said the husband and wife got locked in an altercation over a family feud at about 3:00 on the fateful day. At one stage of altercation the husband became furious and poured kerosene on his wife's body and set the body fire.



British American Tobacco Bangladesh in cooperation with Sandhani, Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College unit organised a voluntary blood collection and distribution programme in Barisal on December 21.

2,495 MTs of rice allocated under VGF, TR, FWP programmes

UNB, Sherpur

A total of 2,495 metric tons of rice was allocated under VGF, TR and FWP programmes in Sherpur on the occasion of the holy Eid-ul-Fitr.

District Relief Office said like the previous years, 220 mts of rice were distributed against 22,000 VGF cards for the destitute people.

Of the total, some 60 mts were distributed in sadar against 6,000 cards, 52 mts in Nalitabari against 5,200 cards, 40 mts in Nokla against 4,000 cards, 28 mts in Jhenaihati

against 2,800 cards, four mts in Sribordi against 4,000 cards.

A total of 1,167 mts of rice was allocated in five upazilas under Rural Infrastructure Maintenance and Reform programme.

The break-up is: Sadar 352 mts, Jhenaihati 252 mts, Sribordi 252 mts, Nokla 180 mts, Nalitabari 228 mts.

Besides, 565 mts of rice were distributed among the people of five upazilas under Rural Infrastructure Development Programme. Under the programme 141 mts of rice were distributed in sadar, 86 mts in

Jhenaihati, 123 mts in Sribordi, 93 mts in Nokla and 106 mts in Nalitabari upazilas.

Meanwhile, a total of 300 mts of rice was allocated for the three constituencies of Sherpur under TR (Special) programme and some 123 mts of rice were distributed among the families affected in an attack by wild elephants.

Moreover, 120 mts of rice were allocated against 12,000 VGF cards for the people affected due to the onrush of hilly water in Nokla and Nalitabari upazilas.



PHOTO: SK MD SHAHIDUL ISLAM

A monument built in memory of the martyrs of the liberation war of Bangladesh in the heart of Brahmanbaria town was inaugurated recently.

Magura DIARY

ACID ATTACK ON HOUSEWIFE

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A housewife suffered acid burn injury in Magura as her husband poured acid on the lower portion of her body. She was admitted to Magura Sadar Hospital in a critical condition on December 22.

The victim was identified as Shirina Khatun, 21, wife of Serajul Islam Babu, a resident of Dhoayee village in Mohammadpur upazila. Shirina said, her husband and his family members beat up her severely. Later, they poured acid on her body. No case was lodged in this connection till filing of this report at around 5 pm on Saturday.

Terrorist killed

A listed terrorist was slaughtered in Magura on December 18.

The victim was identified as Majidul, 38, of village Moshakhali in Shalikka upazila. He was a listed terrorist, police said. Local people said Majidul was kidnapped from his house five days back by some armed miscreants led by Nazrul, another terrorist of Srefaltala village in sadar upazila. He remained untraced since then. Police recovered the beheaded body of Majidul from the side of a pond near his house on Tuesday.

Two outlaws caught by villagers

Two outlaws were caught by the villagers in Magura while they were fleeing on board motorbikes after kidnapping a man on gun-point from Ichakhada village in Sadar upazila on the night of December 20.

Other abductors escaped unhurt with the abducted person. Police and local people said, a gang of armed activists of outlawed Sromojibi Mukti Fouz numbering 7/8 went to the village riding on four motorbikes at around 10 pm on Thursday and kidnapped Saiful Islam alias Kala Mian, 50, for ransom. Sensing the matter, people of the adjacent village of Narihati chased the gang and caught two of them with their motorcycles.

Most people in Satkhira still use kutcha latrines

ABU AHMED, Satkhira

Most people in Satkhira still use kutcha latrines instead of sanitary latrines.

DPHE and UNICEF supplied sanitary equipment, but they completely failed to achieve target in the district town and also in six upazilas due to mismanagement and malpractices prevailing in the department.

Moreover, LGED is spending crores of Taka financed by various UN organisations, but could not do anything due to existing malpractices.

People of Assassuni, Debhata, Kaligonj, Shyamnagar, Tala, Kalaroa and Sadar upazilas live in sub-human condition due to environmental pollution caused by night soils on open spaces on roadsides, river banks, in canals and ponds and near bushes.

Besides, in the rural areas, the cultivators store cowdung adjacent to their dwelling houses and they use kutcha latrines which spread bad odour and pollute the environment.

Moreover, they rot jute in ponds, tanks and pool adjacent to their homesteads which also cause air pollution resulting in various diseases like dysentery, malaria and skin diseases.

A large number of people mostly children die of these diseases for want of proper treatment. Recently due to environmental pollution a new type of fever has broken out.

Butchers indiscriminately slaughter sick and old cattle and the blood, bones and remains of the slaughtered animals are thrown nearby the markets and roads spreading germs and bacteria in large number.

Old and sick animals which are mostly brought from India are largely available in the cattle markets in all seven upazilas of the district at very cheaper rates. Beef is now being sold at Tk 55 to 60 per kg.

On the other hand, shrimp is produced in Satkhira in vast areas of the district and is exported in the foreign countries. Heads and other parts of shrimp are thrown at a close distance of the factories and roadside ditches, spreading germs and bacteria in large number and causing serious health hazards.

Besides, a large number of bidi factories, hotels and restaurants emit thick smoke which pollutes air constantly. As a result the town dwellers are deprived of fresh air and suffer from stomach and intestinal and ophthalmic ailments.

In Satkhira Municipality, the condition of drains and lavatories are very miserable.

Indiscriminate cutting of trees by brick field owners has been hastening the process of deforestation. They cut fruit bearing trees, bamboo roots and burning bricks.

People have asked the government to take positive steps to bring down the rate of pollution.

'Deshnetri Parishad' leader sued on charge of extortion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A case has been recorded with Khulna thana against Kazi Khairuzzaman Shipon, 36, vice president of the central committee of BNP-backed 'Deshnetri Parishad' on charge of extortion.

Contractor of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) Shankar Kumar Sarker filed a written complaint alleging that the central leader of 'Deshnetri Parishad' demanded Tk 50,000 as toll and threatened severe consequence in case of failure.

On the basis of the complaint police arrested Shipon at midnight of December 15 from his residence at power house road.

He was released on bail from the court the following day.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Khulna thana said he has got evidences to prove the guilt of 'Deshnetri Parishad' leader. We have seized a mobile phone set (017-275583) and a letter which were used to threaten the complainant for paying toll, OC said.