

NEWS SNAPS

Four Chouddagram AL leaders expelled

UNB, Comilla
Four leaders of Chouddagram upazila Awami League of Comilla were expelled for anti-organisational activities.

They are Upazilas Awami League secretary Elim Miah Mollah, assistant secretary Abdur Rouf, general secretary of upazila Kirsak League Ali Azam and general secretary of Gholpasha Union AL Abul Bashar. The decision to discipline them was taken at a meeting with upazila AL senior vice president Mominur Rahman.

BCL, Jubo League leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj
A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader and a Jubo League leader were arrested from SS Road of Sirajganj town on Monday night.

They are BCL president Nasimur Rahman and Jubo League president Mostafizur Rahman. They were arrested in front of town Awami League office.

They were kept at Sadar thana. Police said there are several cases against both of them in Sadar thana.

Miscreants loot valuables

UNB, Gazipur
Unidentified miscreants swooped on the house of a local Jubo League leader and looted valuables at Narosinghapur village in Kapasia of Gazipur early Tuesday.

The terrorists attacked the residence of Alamgir Hossain Adel, president of Jubo League Barishap unit, and looted goods worth about Tk 50,000. They also set fire to a room of the house burning down valuables worth Tk one lakh. Local Awami League leaders blamed BNP activists for the incident. Party sources said a group of BNP men beat up Adel, also a schoolteacher, on Dec 23.

Destitute women yet to get VGF rice

UNB, Jheridaha
The rice, which was allocated for destitute Muslim women on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, could not be distributed even after the Eid.

According to competent sources, 4 mts of rice 10kg for each was allotted a week before the Eid for 400 women of Kaliganj. But the rice was not distributed on the plea of non-completion of list. Still, the destitute women were knocking at the door of local municipal office everyday for the rice allocated under VGF programme. Municipality Chairman Abdul Mannan said it takes time in preparing the list due to political reason. "There is no lapse on our part," he said.

10 with smuggled clinkers arrested

UNB, Bagerhat
Some 10 people were held along with smuggled raw materials of cement from two cargoes in Mongla.

Coast guards members seized MV Modinar Pathe and MV Arabil during their regular patrolling recovered 500 mts of clinker worth Tk eight lakh from the two vessels. The clinkers were being brought to a cement factory at Noapara in Jessore.

Valuables worth Tk 6 lakh gutted

UNB, Natore
Valuables worth Tk 6 lakh were gutted in a fire at a local bazaar in Gurudaspur upazila of Natore Monday night.

Police said the fire broke out from a non-government post office at Palsura Patpara Bazaar at about 1.30 am and then raged through two nearby shops. A case was filed.

Youth rapes five-year-old girl

UNB, Natore
A five-year-old girl was abused by a youth at Uttar Borgachha in Natore town Monday.

Police said the youth identified as Ripon, 25, son of Shukur Sarder of the area, took the girl to a nearby sugarcane field and then raped her. Hearing her scream, local residents rushed to the spot and caught Ripon. He was later handed over to police. The victim was being treated at Sadar hospital. A case was filed.

Birth anniversary of Shilpacharya

BSS, Mymensingh
The 87th birth anniversary of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin was observed in Mymensingh recently.

Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Shangrahasala organised an art and painting competition for children and a discussion at its premises on Saturday. Delwar Hussain Khan Dulu MP, attended the discussion as the chief guest and distributed prizes among the winners. Deputy commissioner Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury presided over the discussion. Among others, Professor Mokaram Hossain, Professor Julfikar Rafiq Ranju, and Artist Amirul Islam spoke on the occasion. The discussants paid rich tributes to the memory of Shilpacharya. The discussion was followed by a cultural function presented by the Shilpakala Academy, Mymensingh.

Vegetables farming gains popularity

UNB, Pabna
Due to bumper production in last season cultivators in Pabna are showing more interest in vegetable farming.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said last year farmers brought 7,415 hectares of land under vegetable cultivation against the target of 5,900 hectares and 90,680 mts vegetables were produced. In the current season 8,000 hectares of land in nine upazilas of were earmarked by DAE-Pabna for vegetable cultivation with the production target of 1 lakh mts. But the enthusiastic farmers cultivated 12,000 hectares exceeding the target. Farmers said they were facing problems in marketing the vegetables. When contacted DAE officials said present government has taken up a programme to build some wholesale markets of agricultural products.

Heroin smuggler arrested

UNB, Meherpur
A heroin smuggler was arrested from Boshpara area of Sadar upazila in Meherpur on Saturday.

The arrested was identified as Khaza Ahamed of Comilla. Police said although Khaza is a resident of Dhaka he often comes to Meherpur town for drug business. Acting on a tip-off they arrested him at dead of night. Police also recovered Tk 5 lakh from his possession. A case was filed.

School building construction work on

UNB, Chapainawabganj
Office rooms for nine government primary schools in sadar and three classrooms for a non-government high school in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj are being constructed at a cost of Tk 90.

Facilities Department of the Ministry of Education is implementing the projects, expected to be completed in the current fiscal.

Vehicles donated to municipality authority

UNB, Patuakhali
DPHE-Danida has given three modern vehicles to the municipality authority with a view to help modernise garbage management system of the municipal area. Chief Advisor of Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Components project of the organisation Peter Harsom handed over the vehicles the municipality Chairman Mostaq Ahmed at a function held at municipal auditorium on Thursday. Local political leaders, journalists, municipality commissioners and staffs also attended the function. The vehicles include a modern truck and two trolleys. The NGO has already completed the construction work on two overhead water tanks under the same project and work on the 5-kilometer drainage system of the municipality is likely to be completed soon.

Trafficking of women, children increased

UNB, Jessore
Trafficking of women and children through the frontiers of Jessore has been increased.

Some 500 women and children were trafficked in India during the last 11 months of the current year. Reliable sources said organised gangs collect these women and children from rural areas across the country in the name of giving better jobs in India and send them through Ovonagar and Fullola borders. Local traffickers hand over these victims to Indian traffickers in exchange of Tk 10,000 to 12,000 per person, said one of the traffickers on condition of anonymity. About 6,000 women who have already been dispatched to India are now engaged in sex trading at different brothels, including at Kalighat and Sonagachi of Kolkata.

Woman arrested for 'killing' husband

UNB, Mymensingh
Police arrested a woman and her father from Patilhoi village in Goforgaon upazila on charge of killing her husband.

Police recovered the body of Swapan, 35, a bakery owner, from the latrine of his in-law's house in the same village on Sunday. Police arrested Shahnaj and her father Abdur Rashid after Swapan's brother filed a case against them.

Unabated drug trade in Manikganj, Jamalpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unabated drug trade is going on in Manikganj and Jamalpur.

UNB from Manikganj reports : Drug trading is going on unabated in different places of Manikganj due to indifference of the Narcotics Control Department and law enforcing agencies.

Locals said different types of "deadly" drugs are being sold almost openly at around two thousand points of Manikganj.

According to different sources, local agents of international mafia gang smuggled drugs into the country from different drug producing countries like India, Pakistan, Thailand, Myanmar and the Philippine. Besides, hemp and alcohol are also being produced at some points of Manikganj.

Middle-aged women and young

boys are used in the smuggling of the drugs. It is also alleged that smugglers are buying and selling hemp, phensidyl, heroin and other contraband items with the help of police.

They have managed the law enforcers by giving them a fixed amount of money regularly.

Consequently the number of drug addicts are increasing day by day creating concern among the guardians and peace loving people.

Another report from Jamalpur says : The number of drug addicts has increased alarmingly in Jamalpur town causing concern among the peace loving people.

Locals alleged that rectified spirit, phensidyl, foreign liquor, opium, hemp are being sold almost openly in different Homeo pharmacies, medicine and grocery shops of the town and the youths have become addicted due to the easy availability of the drugs.

The government is also being deprived of huge amount of tax due to illegal trading of drugs.

A source said illegal trading of drugs is going on in some Homeo pharmacies and betel-leaf shops since long. These shops are kept open in the day just to show the people and turned into liquor shops after the sundown. Rectified spirit is also sold in these liquor shops at a very cheap price leading the youths to the path of ruin.

It is alleged that the officials of Narcotics Control Department are quite reluctant to take action against the drug traders as they also get "share" from the traders on monthly basis.

Local leaders urged the district administration to look into the matter and take stringent action in this regard without further delay.

23rd founding anniversary of JCD

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The 23rd founding anniversary of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) was observed in Rajshahi city and its adjoining areas on Tuesday with great enthusiasm.

Leaders and workers of JCD assembled at the party office on Tuesday morning and hoisted national and party flags atop the party office. A colourful rally was also brought out in the city on Tuesday afternoon.

Rajshahi city unit of JCD arranged a meeting at Saheb Bazar which was addressed among others, by Minister for Post and Telecommunications Barrister Aminul Haque as the chief guest and Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation Mijanur Rahman Minu MP as special guest.



Activists of Narayanganj unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal parade B B Road near its office in a colourful procession on Tuesday morning. They observed the 23rd founding anniversary of their organisation on that day.

Tea research instt faces fund crisis

UNB, Moulvibazar

The Bangladesh Tea Research Institute (BTRI), the only one of its kind in the country, is beset with manifold problems.

Similar other agro-research bodies of the country are getting government finance as well as foreign fund to conduct their research activities. But BTRI, which is also a government organisation, does not get any government fund. It has to perform its functions with its own resources, which is quite insufficient.

BTRI was established in 1957 for providing research support to all tea gardens of the country. The problems now confronting include

lack of requisite funds, shortage of scientific officers and want of modern laboratory equipment and machinery. Most of the age-old machinery of the institute went out of order.

Some 36 posts of scientists and 30 posts of officers and employees in the administrative section of the institute have been lying vacant since long. There are nine research departments in BTRI to provide scientific and technical support to 158 tea gardens of the country.

These departments are Soil Chemistry, Agronomy, Biochemistry, Plant Introduction, Botany, Pest Management, Technology, Statistics and the Advisory Department.



State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources A K M Mosharrar Hossain MP recently inaugurated the new education centre of NIIT Limited, the multinational Information Technology Solution company, in Mymensingh as the chief guest. State Minister for Textiles Mizanur Rahman Sinha was present as a special guest. Shah Nurul Kabir Shahin MP, Shah Shahid Sarwar MP, Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu MP, Devjit Sarkar Location Head Bangladesh NIIT Limited and Khurram Khan Chowdhury MP attended the opening ceremony.

Prices of essentials up in Jhalakati

UNB, Jhalakati

Prices of essentials have shot up abnormally in all the markets of Jhalakati with price spiral of fuel, electricity and gas in the country.

Petrol, diesel and kerosene are being sold in the markets at a price much higher than that of the fixed rate.

As a result, owners of buses, minibuses, private cars, tempos, auto-rickshaws, engine-driven boats and trawlers are charging high fare from the passengers.

Marginal farmers are facing

serious problem, as the hiring rates of tractors and swallow engines have become double with the advent of boro paddy season.

The prices of rod, cement, CI sheet, hardboard and hardware materials apart from rice, edible oil, pulse, salt, flour, vegetables, fruits, fishes and poultry birds have also gone up significantly.

When contacted, some traders of hardware materials said they have to sell their goods at higher price as carrying cost of those materials has increased abnormally.

Modhumoti, Nabaganga dying gradually

BSS, Narail

Because of unabated siltation and dumping of waste and garbage, once the mighty rivers Modhumoti and Nabaganga, are dying gradually. Other rivers, the Chitra, the Abra and the Kazle have lost their depth. They cannot hold much water during the rainy season, causing flood.

According to the local Water Development Board, huge quantities of silt are being deposited in the riverbeds because of geological characteristic of the country.

Most of the rivers in the country flow slowly, leaving silt, resulting in emergence of shoals. Silt has been depositing for years together ham-

pering navigation. Siltation in the Modhumoti and the Nabaganga has also affected other small rivers. Navigation is being hampered seriously due to abnormal fall in water level in the rivers. River transport system in Narail region has been facing closure threat.

Transport costs have increased over the years. Many labourers in ferry points and boatmen are now out of job. Thousands of acres of croplands go under floodwater every year.

Besides, the nearly dried-up rivers fail to provide irrigation facilities to arable lands. Moreover, they have edged towards a desert, threatening cultivation.

Contrabands worth over Tk 2 lakh seized

UNB, Gopalganj

Police in their separate drives in Kashiani upazila of Gopalganj have seized huge contrabands worth over Tk 2 lakh and arrested nine people.

The goods included phensidyl, explosives, chocolate bombs, perfumes, shaving cream and cosmetics.

Acting on secret information, police raided Bhatiapara ferry ghat and seized 10 litres of phensidyl and huge empty bottles and corks Friday morning and arrested Kayek Mollah in this connection.

Later in the day, police raided the Kalna ferry ghat and arrested Romena of Jessore along with 50 bottles of Indian phensidyl.

On the previous day, police arrested Lokman, Liton and Daru of Narail from the same ferry ghat terminal along with 410 cartons of Indian explosive.

Earlier on Dec 26, police in two drives at the same Kalna ferry ghat recovered 420 dozens of Indian chocolate bombs and 230 cartons of explosive, and arrested two men, Kafizur Sarder and Golap Khan, also from Narail.

In another raid at the ghat on the same day, police arrested two youths Bachchu and Polash Kumar of Moksudpur upazila along with

Indian goods, including cosmetics, shaving cream and perfumes.

Police said Kalna ghat adjacent to Bhatiapara port has long been used as safe route for smuggling Indian goods.

Working woman gangraped in Khulna

UNB, Khulna

A working women was gangraped at Solepur village in Rupsha upazila of Khulna early Monday.

Medical sources said three youths sneaked into the room of the 30-year-old woman, an employee of Meghna Salt Industries at Rupsha, as she was asleep, and raped her one after another at gunpoint.

She had undergone medical test at General Hospital Tuesday.

A case was filed.

But police could not yet arrest the rapists although two of them were identified by local residents. They are Monir and Selim.