

## NEWS SNAPS

## Tk 9.3 cr loan for Bandarban farmers

UNB, Bandarban

Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has taken up a programme to disburse Tk 9.3 crore loans among the farmers of Bandarban in the current fiscal year.

The bank will disburse the loan through its nine branches on various sectors including crop production, pisciculture, cow fattening, purchase of cattle, irrigation and cultivation of rubber under its poverty alleviation scheme. Besides, the bank has undertaken a programme to provide loans among the growers of Ruma and Thanchi upazilas for farming orange and pineapple. Meanwhile, the bank realised Tk 2.83 crore outstanding loans from the farmers till Dec 31.

## Tk 4.20 cr loan for poor in Narsingdi BSS, Narsingdi

An amount of 4.20 crore will be disbursed under Rural Livelihood Project of the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) as loan among the members of 174 associations in six upazilas of Narsingdi in the current fiscal.

ABRDB source said the loan will be disbursed among the members of the association for self-employment under poverty alleviation programme of the government. Distribution of loan has already been started and so far Tk 64 lakh has been disbursed among the 1,621 members of the associations. The loan is being given for cattle and goat rearing, poultry farming, nursery business, vegetables cultivation and small business. BRDB imparted training to 639 poor men and women on self-employment under poverty alleviation programme in Narsingdi this year.

## Tk 1.55 cr bridge construction project on BSS, Narsingdi

Construction of seven steel bridges is in full swing at different upazilas of Narsingdi at an allocation of Tk 1.55 crore in the current fiscal year.

According to an official source, three bridges are being constructed in Narsingdi Sadar upazila, two in Monohardi upazila, one each in Shibpur and Rajpura upazilas. The Local Government Engineering Department has been implementing the project with Japanese assistance. The construction work will be completed soon.

## Move to prevent child, woman trafficking

UNB, Kushtia

In a bid to prevent child and woman trafficking from the southwestern region of the country, Mukta Nari O Shishu Unnayan Sangstha in collaboration with Reporters Unity, Kushtia organised a press conference in Kushtia on Saturday.

Local non-government organisation ATSEC representative Pronab Kumar Nandi, coordinator of Mukta Nari, Monwar Ahmed and president of Kushtia Reporters Unity Matiar Rahman Lallu, among others, addressed the conference. Mukta Nari O Shishu Unnayan Sangstha undertook various programmes to prevent child and woman trafficking from the region in addition to formation of a border watching committee, it was informed in the press conference. Meanwhile, an organisation styled Southwestern Anti-Trafficking Forum consisting of 12 non-government organisations from various districts of the region has been formed aiming at checking child and woman trafficking.

## Work on Kanlee bridge going on

UNB, Moulvibazar

Work on a 156.17-metre long Kanlee bridge over the river Sunai in Moulvibazar is going on in full swing at a cost Tk six crore.

Some 25 per cent work has already been completed and the entire work is expected to be completed by two years. Initially past Awami League government allocated Tk 3.98 crore for constructing a 130.27-metre bridge on Sylhet-Shahbazpur road. Former parliament members Borolekha Shahabuddin Ahmed and Golapganj-Bianibazar Nurul Islam Nahid inaugurated the construction work of the bridge during the last part of the Awami League government. The present government increased the length of the bridge from 130.27 metre to 156.17-metre and the cost has also been increased to Tk 6 crore. The bridge would establish direct road link between Shahbazpur and Sylhet.

## Foundation of Bogra PDB office laid

UNB, Bogra

A three-storied building for local Power Development Board (PDB) office will be constructed at a cost of Tk 61 lakh with financial assistance from Asian Development Bank.

Local MP Hellaluzzaman laid the foundation stone of the building on Dec 4. Construct of the building is expected to be completed by August 2001.

## 2,61,024.62 bales of raw jute produced

BSS, Satkhira

A total of 2,61,024.62 bales of raw jute were produced in seven upazilas of Satkhira during the current season.

According to office source, a total of 5,219 hectares were brought under jute cultivation this season, 5,189 hectares were cultivated under Tosha variety and only 30 hectares under local variety. Of the total, 1,256 hectares were cultivated in Satkhira Sadar upazila, 2321 hectares in Kalaroa, 1424 hectares in Tala, 70 hectares in Debhata, 115 hectares in Kaliganj, 25 hectares in Assasuni and only eight hectares in Shymnagar upazila.

## Poverty alleviation scheme undertaken

UNB, Magura

Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) under its poverty alleviation programme will disburse farm credit totaling Tk 15.70 crore in Magura this fiscal.

Officials said the loan is being distributed among farmers for crop cultivation, purchasing bullocks and irrigation machines, and undertaking income generating small business like pisciculture, cottage industries and poultry and dairy farming. During the last three months, the bank disbursed Tk 3 crore among the farmers through its 17 branches. Meanwhile, Facilities Department has undertaken a project to set up a Polytechnic Institute here at a cost of Tk 4.20 crore. Work on the project is likely to begin soon.

## Quacks exploiting rural people

BSS, MEHERPUR

The rural people of Meherpur are being cheated by the quacks everyday, local people said.

According to the local Civil Surgeon office, there are 18 health Sub-centres in 18 unions of the districts but most of these have no medical officers. Some sub-centres have medical officers, but they do not go there regularly. Due to non-availability of qualified doctors rural people go to the quacks for treatment. Taking this advantage, the quacks often resort to various tricks to cheat the innocent and helpless people. In various cases, they do not take fees, but demand high-price for medicines. In order to get prompt result they often use high doses of anti-biotics and other medicines. According to officials, there are over 300 quacks in different parts of the Meherpur district and most of them are exploiting the rural people.

## Power situation in Narail miserable

UNB, Narail

Frequent power disruption and load shedding in Narail town and adjoining areas have made the life of the town dwellers miserable.

Town dwellers said the areas plunge into darkness after sundown giving rise to anti-social activities. Production in mills and factories has come down alarmingly causing huge loss to the owners. The dwellers said many of their electronic household gadgets have been rendered inoperative due to low voltage and power fluctuation. Owners of mills and factories alleged that with the decrease of production due to frequent power failure they are forced to retrench workers. Besides, prices of industrial products have shot up adversely affecting the consumers. Local people said despite repeated appeals, Power Development Board failed to take steps to improve the power situation in the town.

## 25 development projects implemented

BSS, Meherpur

District Council of Meherpur has implemented 25 projects in this fiscal year at a cost of Tk 60,00,000 lakh.

According to official sources, under the programme many development projects including 15 roads, three bridges, three schools, hat-bazaar, mosque, college and a market will be developed. Besides, four road side shades will be constructed.

## Loan for landless, marginal farmers

BSS, Khulna

Bangladesh Krishi Bank will distribute Tk 15,17,00,000 as loan for landless and marginal farmers in 10 southwestern district of the country during the current financial year.

Of them, Tk 1,60,00,000 will be distributed in Jhenidah, Tk 1,25,00,000 in Jessore, Tk 4 crore in Masura, Tk 60 lakh in Narail, Tk 1,07,00,000 in Khulna, Tk 1,75,00,000 in Bagerhat, Tk 20,00,000 in Satkhira, Tk 1,70,00,000 in Kushtia, and Tk one crore each in Chuadanga and Meherpur districts. Distribution of loan has already begun and will continue till June next. Meanwhile, Sonali Bank will distribute Tk 2,53,00,000 as potato farming loan in 16 southwestern districts of the country during the ensuing Rabi season.

## Frequent change of VC hampers administrative, academic activities at IU

## Political pressure alleged

RAHAT AHMED, Kushtia.

Frequent change of vice chancellor (VC) at Islamic University (IU) hampers greatly the administrative and academic activities of the university.

None of the vice chancellors of this university could complete term because of tremendous pressure by the political parties and student fronts.

Since its inception on January 30, 1981, a total of six vice chancellors have been appointed in the university, but each of them had to leave office in one or two years. None could fulfill the four-year term of vice chancellor in face of movements by the government party affiliated students and teachers.

The reason behind such undesirable consequence at this university is due to political appointment of VC by each government.

According to the Islamic University Act-1980 (Clause-10), (1) the Vice Chancellor shall be appointed by the Chancellor for a period of four years on such terms and conditions as the Chancellor may determine.

2) 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 causes, the Chancellor shall make such arrangements for the performance of the functions of the Vice Chancellor as he deem it.

Immediate past VC Prof Lutfor Rahman had to resign on November 3 following pressure from the pro-BNP and Jamaat teachers after holding the office for only one year one month. Teachers loyal to BNP and Jamaat gave an ultimatum to him since the time of take-over of power by the BNP led alliance on October 10. He was appointed on October 19, 2000 by the then ruling Awami League for a four-year term.

Prof ANM Momotaj Uddin was the first VC of the university. The then President Ziaur Rahman made him VC on January 31, 1981. A serious repercussion was created among the teachers and students of the university.

He was removed by former President HM Ershad on December 27, 1988 in face of a joint movement by BCL, JCD and the left leaning student fronts following demolition of the IU Shaheed Minar.

Prof Muhammad Sirajul Islam of the Islamic History and Culture Department of Dhaka University replaced him on December 28, 1988. It is learnt that Prof Siraj was loyal to the socialist movement. He, however, fled the campus on June 17, 1991 after holding the office of

vice chancellor for two years only amidst vigorous anti-VC movement by teachers and student organisations backed by BNP and Jamaat.

Prof Mohammad Abdul Hamid of the Economics Department of Rajshahi University was appointed the VC of this university on June 20, 1991 by the then BNP government. At that time he was the vice president of RU unit of Zia Parisad.

He had a bitter experience on the campus when BCL, JCD, ICS and left leaning student organisations started an indefinite siege to the VC's residence to press home for his resignation on allegation of corruption and session jam. He also fled the campus in the midnight of April 21, 1995.

Then the BNP government appointed Prof Mohammad Inam-Ul-Huq of the Islamic History and Culture Department of Chittagong University as the fourth VC of the university in May 1995. He was also the then vice president of CU unit of Zia Parisad.

After take-over of the administration by Awami League BCL and ICS started movement demanding his resignation.

Teachers loyal to BNP also called a press conference and condemned for his 'collaboration' with the occupation Pakistan forces in 1971. He was one of the CU teachers who signed against the independence of the country. He left the campus on September 2, 1997 after being humiliated.

Prof Muhammad Kayes Uddin of the Bio-Chemistry Department of Rajshahi University was made the fifth VC while he held the post of vice president of RU Bangabandhu Parisad. He was appointed the vice chancellor on September 3, 1997 by the then ruling Awami League. He was, however, removed by the same government on October 19, 2000 and was appointed the VC of the Open University. He was removed from office due to some of his controversial political appointments.

Prof Lutfor Rahman of the Chemistry Department of Rajshahi University was made the sixth VC on October 19, 2000.

Prof Mustafizur Rahman of Dhaka University took over the charge of the vice chancellor on December 11 last year. IU Chancellor Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia appointed him for a four-year term. The post was lying vacant for 38 days.



PHOTO: DELIWAR KABIR

Farmers make good use of the shoals which have appeared on the bed of the river Padma near the Hardinge Bridge at Paksey in Pabna. Many shoals have emerged on the river bed recently due to sharp fall in water level of the river.

## Three Indian fishermen pushed back

UNB, Chapainawabganj

Three Indian fishermen were pushed back after the expiry of their jail term through the Sona Masjid check post in Chapainawabganj on Thursday.

Bangladesh Rifles on the border outpost handed over the Indian nationals to the BSF of Mohadipur outpost.

They were identified as Mofazzal of village Baburbona in Kaliachak thana, Abdul Hakim of village Sujapur and Ataur of village Joampur of Boishnab Nagar thana of Maldaha district.

District jail sources said they were caught by the BDR while entering into Bangladesh territory without valid documents and the court sentenced them to different terms.

## Armed terrorists ransack 15 shops in Lalmonirhat

UNB, Lalmonirhat

Armed terrorists, said to be BNP activists, ransacked 15 shops and looted cash at North Bengal crossing in Lalmonirhat town Monday.

Witnesses said the terrorists, numbering 60-70, laid siege to the area chanting slogans in favour of BNP and then swooped on the shops.

A shopkeeper was injured in the attack.

Later, the shopkeepers put up barricade on the road protesting the attack.

## Three killed in clash over land in Jessore

UNB, Jessore

Three people were killed and 10 others injured in a clash between two rival groups over a land dispute at a village in Chuadanga district on Sunday.

The clash took place at Nishchintapur village in Jibannagar upazila in the morning when 20-25 supporters of Mizanur Rahman attacked the house of rival Lashkar Ali Mondal leaving 13 people injured.

Of them, Lashkar, 47, died at Jibannagar Upazila Health Complex while his son, Shahajal Islam, 22, at Jessore General Hospital, and former UP chairman Mizanur, 50, died on way to Dhaka.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers of Samajtantrik Chhatra Dal of Chittagong University (CU) parade the streets of Chittagong city in a procession demanding immediate reopening of the university.

## All of a family flee home in Natore in fear of terrorists

ANWAR ALI, Natore

All the members of a family at Karota village in Dighapatia union of Sadar upazila in Natore have been staying out of their home in fear of a group of terrorists.

Md Hashem Ali and other members of his family fled away from home because a group of terrorists have threatened their lives.

Miscreants led by Taju, son of Islam Mollah, Mamun, son of Md Hanif Ali and Babu, son of Tasir Mollah of the same village used to tease and send love letters to Hashem's youngest daughter Muslima Khatun (Rony), a student of class seven.

On November 25 afternoon while she was returning home from school, Taju obstructed and gave her an objectionable proposal. On refusal, he molested her until she managed to flee from the spot.

Afterwards, the victim complained to Taju's father about Taju's notorious activity. This has enraged him.

In the same evening he along with Mamun and Babu went to Hashem's house and threatened to kill Hashem.

Hashem informed the matter to village leaders (matbars). At around 8pm on the day, Taju and two of his accomplices armed with firearms and lethal weapons swooped on Hashem's house. They entered into the house by breaking open the door and beat up the family members. They assaulted his eldest daughter Jony and snatched away her costly gold chain.

At around 11 pm on the same day, the village leaders arranged an arbitration (salish) at the village and found the three accused guilty. The terrorists became angry hearing this news and threatened, in presence

of village leaders, to kill Hashem.

After the incidents Hashem felt insecure at his village home and decided to leave for Natore town. The next dawn Hashem along with his daughter Rony and son Forhad set for Natore town on board a 'Mishuk' (one kind of motor vehicle). When they reached at Karota pucca road, the miscreants armed with pistol, rod and hammer obstructed them. They dragged Hashem out of the vehicle. They broke his right leg beating him like anything with rod and hammer. They throttled Rony and snatched a bag carrying costly gold ornaments. Forhad also received injuries. The miscreants fled away as soon as at the local people rushed to the spot hearing the hue and cry of the victims.

Hashem was later admitted to Christian Missionary Hospital in a critical condition with severe injuries on head, chest and leg where the miscreants threatened to kill him.

Hashem's wife filed a case accusing three persons with Natore Sadar police station on November 26. But none was arrested.

On November 29, Hashem appealed to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Natore for justice.

Hashem also informed this correspondent that four years ago, the miscreants called out of home his 14 years old son Joynal. Since then Joynal remained missing. Previously, the miscreants used to tease his other daughter Jony which compelled him to arrange for her early marriage at tender age.

When contacted, Officer in Charge (OC) of Natore Sadar thana told this correspondent that they had been investigating the matter.