

NEWS SNAPS

16 victims of bus accident identified**UNB, Dhaka**

Sixteen bodies of Monday's tragic bus accident on Dhaka-Aricha highway have been identified.

The victims are Parveen alias Lovely, 20, of Satura in Manikganj and their 10-month-old baby Lablu, Bhuli, 18, sister of Parveen, Abdul Halim, 60, and his son Mostafa, 28, of Gopalpur in Satura upazila. Samad, 32, of Majail, Abdul Halim, 40, of Shyamliashi, Yunus Ali, 26, of Gopalbadital, Sukur Ali, 48, of Telbasia Polashbari, Surut Ali, 40, of Kamalapur and Ali Hossain of Maishdail in Savar, Moidul Islam, 32, of Shiboloy, Karim, 32, of Gopalpur in Manikganj, Abul Kashem, 60, of Kumrail, Dhamrai, Bashir Ahmed Kajol, 24, of Hatubhanga, Narsingdi and Siddiqur Rahman of Babuganj, Barisal.

50 tolas of gold looted by terrorists**UNB, Sathkira**

Terrorists looted gold ornaments of more than 50 tolas and cash from the guests attending a Hindu funeral rite (Sadhya) in south Fingri village in sadar upazila on Monday night.

The victims said the terrorists stormed into the house of Laxmipada at 10 pm and looted the ornaments from 100 guests at gunpoint. The Sadhya was arranged following the death of Laxmipada's mother. The terrorists also threatened the owner of the house and the victims of dire consequence if they filed case or informed the police about their misdeed. Police said they have heard about the armed robbery but no case was filed with them.

Brother of Prothom Alo reporter beaten**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

An expelled JCD leader angered by a news report about his misdeeds and vandalism mercilessly beat up the brother of a senior reporter of the Bengali daily 'Prothom Alo' at Sitakunda upazila headquarters in Chittagong on Monday night.

Police and witnesses said, the expelled thana unit president of JCD, student wing of the ruling BNP, Zahur Ahmed alias Loha Zahur attacked Abdullah Al Jaber, younger brother of Mamun Abdullah, senior reporter of the Prothom Alo, Chittagong office, while he was waiting in front of a transport office at Sitakunda on his way to Chittagong at around 7pm. A case has been filed with Sitakunda thana in this connection.

Police-outlaws gunfight in Kushtia**UNB, Kushtia**

Police fought a fierce gunfight with outlaws belonging to 'Sramajibi Mukti Andolan' at village Bhaluka in Kumarkhali upazila on Tuesday.

Although police arrested three cadres along with a gun and 22 bullets, the fight between the police and the outlawed party cadres was continuing till filing of this report at 9 pm. Three extremists were injured in the gunfight, unconfirmed sources said. They were undergoing treatment somewhere in the area to escape police arrest. The four-hour clash erupted at noon when three teams of police raided a den of 'Malek Bahini' of the extremist group. n information, three platoons of police led by additional police super Abul Kalam Azad rushed to the spot, some 25 kilometers off Kushtia town, and engaged in gunfight. rlier on Monday night, five supporters of 'Ektil group' belonging to Biplobi Communist Party sustained bullet injuries in another encounter with police at Mulgram village. olice arrested two cadres of the group -- Sachchu and Etim -- and seized a foreign-made shotgun and three bullet from their possession.

Three cops hurt in attack by terrorists**OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj**

Three policemen were injured in an attack by a gang of terrorists at Brahmandi Bazaar in Arahazar upazila on Tuesday.

Police said they arrested a terrorist named Gulzar from the bazaar in the morning. While they were returning to the police station, accomplices of Gulzar swooped on them and tried to snatch Gulzar. The gang also beat up the policemen and confined them in a shop. On information, additional police rushed to the spot and rescued their colleagues. The injured policemen are SI Jamal and Constables Narayan and Azhar.

One killed in bomb attack by miscreants**UNB, Faridpur**

A man was killed and another injured seriously in a bomb attack by some miscreants in Faridpur town on Sunday evening.

The deceased was identified as Siraj, 22, son of Shahjahan Mondol of Lalan Nagar Slum in Gochalmat area of the town. Witnesses said Siraj died on the spot when some miscreants hurled bomb at him near Zila Parishad market of the town. He died on the spot. Moslem Mondol, 45, a rickshawpuller was also injured in the attack. He was rushed to the General Hospital in a critical condition. Police said Siraj was a listed criminal and released from jail a few weeks ago. But the reason behind the killing could not be known immediately. Meanwhile, miscreants gunned down another youth Mir Mahabub at his residence in West Alipur area in the town on Saturday.

Body of businessman recovered**UNB, Bogra**

The body of a businessman was recovered from a room of a residential hotel in Bogra town on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Ali Azgar, 48, a resident of Jurain area in Dhaka. Police said Azgar went to Bogra for business purpose on Friday night and hired a room of a hotel. As he did not open the door till noon on the next day, hotel staffs called police. Breaking the door, police recovered the body from the room. There was no injury mark on the body and Tk 1.61 lakh was found in his briefcase. The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

UP chairman injured by terrorists**UNB, Tangail**

A union parishad (UP) chairman and his brother-in-law were injured in an attack by terrorists at Panchtikri in Bhuapur upazila of Tangail Sunday night.

Police said the terrorists numbering 12 caught Idris Ali Master, chairman of Lokerpara Union in Ghatail upazila and his brother-in-law Harunur Rashid, and chopped them with a sharp weapon when they were returning home by motorcycle. The terrorists also torched their motorcycle. Idris Ali, an Awami League activist, was admitted to Dhaka Orthopedic Hospital while Harunur Rashid to upazila health complex. Reasons behind the incident could not be known immediately. A case was filed in this connection.

Rampant smuggling of shallow machine**UNB, Sathkira**

Imported shallow machine, diesel and kerosene are now being smuggled out to India through different frontier areas of Sathkira.

According to local people, the smugglers are continuing their heinous activities with the help of some dishonest members of border guards and other law enforcing agencies. The shallow machine imported from China are now being sold in the local market between Tk 6,200 and Tk 6,500 and these machines have high demand in India during the current IRR1-Boro season. At present the smugglers are selling these machines at Rs 8,000 per piece to traders outside the border. Besides, diesel is being sold at Rs 23 per liter against the local price of Tk 17 and kerosene at Rs 20 against Tk 15.

Five schools in Gazipur awarded**UNB, Gazipur**

Five schools, three colleges and one madrasah in Gazipur were awarded prizes for holding the examinations in an environment free from copying.

Information Secretary Syed Marghub Morshed was present at the ceremony as chief guest and distributed prizes among the respective heads of the institution. Gazipur Reporters' Unity organised a function in this connection at Rajbari ground on Saturday. Chaired by Gazipur Reporters' Unity president Nasir Ahmed, the function was addressed, among others, by DC Shahabullah, Nurul Islam, Mukul Kumar Mallik and journalists Mazharul Islam and Mobarak Hossain.

Abductor gets life term imprisonment**UNB, Nilphamari**

A court in Nilphamari on Saturday sentenced a man to life term imprisonment and fined him Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer rigorous imprisonment (RI) for one year more in an abduction case.

According to prosecution, Akhter Ali, son of Abdul Jabbar of Paschim Chilli in Domar upazila kidnapped Majeda Begum of the same village on May 22, 2000. Father of the victim filed a case against Akhter Ali under Woman and Child Repression Act with the local police. The District and Sessions Judge ATM Golam Kibria after examining the witnesses and records awarded the punishment.

10,100 arrested in Jessore last year**UNB, Jessore**

Police arrested 10,100 people, including the listed-armed terrorists, convicted fugitives and warrantee accused last year.

Police recovered 411 firearms, 450 bullets and cartridges and huge quantity of explosives during the period. Police filed 69 cases and arrested 104 people in this connection. The seized arms included SMG, cut rifles, SBBL guns, guns, revolvers, pistols, pipe guns, shutter guns and other arms. Police also searched 22,600 motor vehicles and seized 140 of them during the same period.



PHOTO: STAR

A heap of banana lying unsold beside the Rangpur-Dhaka highway. This year a bumper production of banana has brought misery for growers due to low price in markets.

Growers deprived of fair price of banana in 5 dists**MOZAMMEL HUQ, Rangpur**

Banana has grown abundantly in five districts of greater Rangpur zone. But thousands of growers are deprived of fair price due to dearth of buyers.

Most of the markets in five districts, small and big, are now flooded with banana where the farmers wait for hours together to sell their produce, but in vain. They alleged that they often fall victims in the hands of a section of profit-mongering people. They are compelled to sell their produce, which they carry to the markets on head and by carts and other means, at cheaper rate much below the production cost.

In Rangpur town four bananas are being sold between Tk 1 to 3, according to quality. In the previous years, four bananas were sold at Tk 4.

In greater Rangpur zone Mithapukur, Pirgonj, Pirgacha, Badargonj, Taragonj, Gobindagonj, Palashbari, Fulchhari, Shaghata, Gaibandha, Sundargonj, Lalmonirhat, Rajarhat, Hatibandha, Kaligonj, Patgram, Kishoregonj, Dimla, Domar, Bhurungamari and Nageshwari upazilas are banana growing areas. Any visitor in these areas will notice huge bananas piled up beside Rangpur-Dhaka highway or lying unsold in the markets.

The aggrieved farmers alleged that they were encouraged by different government and non-government agencies to grow more banana. But none came forward to ensure fair price of banana.

Some agriculture experts said that there is a good prospect of exporting banana to the foreign countries. In this effect, proper measures should be taken.

Mushroom growth of brickfields threatening environment**AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj**

Unplanned and mushroom growth of brickfields have been threatening the environment in Sirajganj.

Unabated use of timber instead of coal is contributing to ecological imbalance. With the start of brick cutting season thousands of maunds of timber are being stocked in brickfields. Excepting bamboo branches, use of any other timber is prohibited in brickfields. A violator of this rule is supposed to be punished with imprisonment or to be fined Tk 50 thousand or both.

However, none seems to be careful in using timbers. Brickfield owners are collecting timbers from different fruit bearing trees by paying price in advance from the rural areas. If this trend is continued ecological balance is feared to be in disarray in near future.

Brickfield owners are using timber instead of coal before the very nose of the authorities concerned. Administration and members of law-enforcing agencies remain silent due to reasons best know to them. There is a clear directive from the Environment Department that brickfield can be set up only on the banks of river or canal or beside any large water body. Earth should be used in the field which may be collected from that river canal or water body. Besides, to release smoke there should be a 120 feet high chimney. But almost all the chimneys used in the brickfields in Sirajganj are found to be 40-50 feet high.

People of Sirajganj, Belkuchi, Raiganj, Tarash, Kazipur, Ullapara Shahzadpur, and Kamarkhand where most of the fields are situated are the direct sufferers of brick manufacturing hazards. Carbon mixed smokes are emitting through the short smoke releasers of those

fields which cause illness among the children in these areas. Many fruit bearing trees, nowadays, do not bear fruit.

Virtually government officials are encouraging unplanned and illegal setting up of brickfields by approving site, providing bank loan and conducting on the spot inspection. In this way they are regularising the irregularities.

In such a situation some unscrupulous brick traders are damaging the environment unchecked and unhindered. None seems to have any headache about the matter. Not only carbon mixed smoke, but waste of brickfield is another threat to environment. Where a brickfields are set up, the land loses its fertility for cultivation. Brickfield owners make money, land owners and contractors erect building, government officials make money taking bribes by allowing to continue the

bad practice, but they are spoiling the health of the next generation. But who cares?

UNB from Rangamati reports: Forest areas in the hilly region of Rangamati are shrinking fast due to widespread cutting of tree for using in the kills of brickfields.

There are 10 brickfields in Rangamati where timbers are mainly burnt defying the government ban. Over one thousand maunds of timbers are burnt in these kilns everyday, a competent source said.

Under the amended Forest Act, 1992 burning of timber in the brickfields is prohibited.

But, reluctance of the authorities concerned to take effective measures in implementing the law provides an opportunity to the brick fields owners to use trees indiscriminately in the kilns.



PHOTO: STAR

In Sirajganj timbers are burnt in most of the brick fields defying a government ban on burning of timber in the kilns. Reluctance of the authorities concerned to take effective steps in implementing the law provides a great opportunity to the brick field owners to use trees in the kilns.

Jhenidah in grip of severe cold**DELWAR KABIR, Jhenidah**

Jhenidah is now in grip of severe cold.

Here mercury comes down to 15 degree Celsius in the early morning.

Foggy weather usually prevails at midnight. Sometimes fog continues till 9 am causing much inconvenience to the plying of transport vehicles.

While talking to a driver of a Khulna-Dhaka bound night coach 'Eagle Paribahan', he said to this correspondent, they are compelled to ply their vehicles at low speed because of foggy weather. It takes more time to reach the destination, he told.

Another driver of a motor launch 'MV Padma' informed this correspon-

Show cause notice on IU Correspondent of Janakantho**RAHAT AHMED, Kushtia**

The Islamic University (IU) authorities recently served a show cause notice on the campus reporter of Daily Janakantho on charge of publishing a report involving the new IU Vice Chancellor.

The IU authorities issued the notice on the reporter named Akhil Podder on December 27 last year. Akhil is also a Masters student of Bangla Department. The authorities asked him why he would not be punished for publishing "a false and fabricated" report about the new VC.

The show cause issued by the Registrar of the university also asked the reporter to reply by December 30. The show cause notice said a report published in the daily on December 11 termed the new IU VC Prof Mustafijur Rahman as an identified collaborator of the then Pakistani occupation forces during the liberation war in 1971.

But the reporter refuting the allegation said, "I have quoted excerpts from the book 'Ekattorer Ghatok O Dalalra Ke Kothai (4th edition)' published by 'Muktijudho Chelona Bikash Kendra' page-192."

The notice sparked strong criticism and commotion among the teachers and students of the university.

The IU Registrar while commenting on it said, "He might be a journalist, but any student can be punished due to violation of Code of Conduct of the university."

The Janakantho reporter claimed that he did not receive the show cause notice.

The Registrar office is reportedly reissuing the show cause notice to the reporter as it had been returned to the office from the Bangla Department.

Meanwhile, IU Press Club criticised the authorities of the university for serving such notice in absence of Akhil in the department.

