

NEWS SNAPS

Housewife strangled by family members

UNB, Kurigram
A housewife was strangled by her family members at village Uttar Chhatgopalpur in Bhurungamari upazila of Kurigram on Sunday.
Police said Firoza Khatun, 28, had an altercation with her sister-in-law Jarina over a trifling matter. At one stage of quarrel, Jarina and her two daughters strangled Firoza. Autopsy of the body was done. A case was filed.

Jaundice spreading alarmingly

UNB, Kishoreganj
The water-borne disease, jaundice has been spreading alarmingly in all the 13 upazilas of Kishoreganj, particularly in rural areas.
According to physicians, the symptoms of the disease are yellowish urine, eyes, whole body and vomiting tendency. They said there is no need for any medicine for its treatment. Only complete rest and normal diet can cure the disease. The worst affected areas are Itna, Mitamoin, Nikil, Austogram, Bajlupur, Kuliarchar, Bhairab, Tarail and Karimganj upazilas. The villagers said the jaundice patients go to the rural quacks for herbal and traditional. The common people including the educated ones have full faith in the herbal treatment of the disease. They said the homeopath doctors are also giving treatment to the patients on contract basis in the rural areas.

Warm clothes distributed

UNB, Kurigram
Different welfare organisations have distributed warm clothes among the distressed cold-hit people of Thakurgaon last week.
Safuddin Ahmed Foundation of Dhaka and local Jagrity Unnayan Sangstha distributed warm clothes in different areas on Monday. On the same day Director of Jagrity Nargis Chowdhury, Adv Touhidul Islam and Abdul Latif distributed the clothes to sweepers, labourers and poor people at the municipality auditorium. Meanwhile, Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer, local BNP leaders and mosque committees distributed over 300 blankets among the poor people living in roadsides and verandahs of different offices.

Memo submitted to Agoiljhara

UNB, Barisal
Local BNP activists under the banner of general people held a demonstration demanding abolition of newly constituted municipalities in Agoiljhara upazila saying that it would benefit a limited number of people.
Over a thousand supporters also brought out a protest procession and held a meeting to press home their demand. Among others, BNP convener Abdul Kader spoke. Later they submitted a memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) where they said additional taxes were imposed on the local people in the name of constituting new municipality.

Most restaurants in Kishoreganj dirty

UNB, Kishoreganj
Mushroom growth of restaurants in 13 upazilas of Kishoreganj has been threatening the public health for a long time.
Most of the restaurants have been erected beside the lanes and by-lanes. These are mostly dirty and not cleaned regularly. Foodstuffs are being cooked and stored in an unhealthy manner in these restaurants. The district and upazila administrations are reluctant to take action against the dishonest owners of restaurants due to reasons best known to them. Besides, people are facing problems in absence of standard restaurants especially at Kuliarchar, Bajlupur and Bhairab pourashavas. Moreover, adulteration of foodstuff is rampant in various restaurants in the town and upazilas causing health hazards. Local leaders urged the authorities concerned to look into the matter and take necessary steps without further delay.

2 imprisoned for keeping forged money

UNB, Thakurgaon
A special tribunal in Thakurgaon has convicted two men and sentenced them to six years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) each for keeping forged money.
They were identified as Ershad Ali and his uncle Poliruddin of Moheshmari village in Baliadangi upazila. The court also fined them Tk 3,000 each, in default, to suffer six months more RI. According to the prosecution, a forged note of Tk 500 denomination was found from Ershad Ali at Baliadangi bazaar on November 12, 1999. Later after investigation it was found that his uncle Poliruddin gave him the forged note. After examining witnesses and records Judge Kazi MA Jainal Abedin awarded the punishment on Wednesday.

Smuggled Indian clothes recovered

UNB, Chapainawabganj
Police recovered smuggled Indian clothes and medicine worth Tk 7.5 lakh from Dhakkhinchari Mirzapur ferry ghat area of Sadar upazila in Chapainawabganj on Friday.
Police acting on a secret information conducted the drive and recovered four bundles of clothes and two cartons of medicine. The recovered medicines include pathedrin injection and various types of tablets.

IRRI-Boro cultivation on 60,600 hectares

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari
About 60,600 hectares of land have been brought under IRRI-Boro cultivation in the current season in Nilphamari.
Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said the production target has been fixed at 2.07 lakh metric tons. Eighty one deep tubewells, 16,919 shallow tubewells, 36 power pumps and 7,136 hand driven pumps have been installed to irrigate the land during the dry season. Farmers have apprehended that production cost of paddy might be raised this year due to price-hike of power and diesel.

RU faces financial crisis, says VC

RU CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi University (RU), the second oldest university of the country, has been facing an acute financial crisis.
The university is now running with a deficit of Tk 14 crore in the current budget.
There is a net deficit of over Tk one crore in the examination remuneration fund while the pension fund is almost exhausted.
Reckless expenditures due to unplanned appointments at all tiers by the administration during the last five years of the Awami League (AL) regime is solely responsible for the dismal economic state of the university, said the newly appointed Vice

Chancellor (VC) Prof Faisal Islam Faruqui to this correspondent.
He took over the charge of Vice Chancellor of the university from former VC Prof M Saidur Rahman Khan on November 13. Khan was removed by the President. Prof Faruqui was the Dean of the Science Faculty prior to his taking the responsibility of VC.
The new VC stressed the need for observing strict austerity to overcome the ailing economic condition of the university. He also promised his all-out measures to free the university from violence and session jam. He sought cooperation of all concerned to achieve this goal.
Most of the residential halls of the university remained under control of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL),

student wing of Awami League (AL) during the previous AL regime. At present Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of BNP rules most of the halls.
Activists of Chhatra Shibir, student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, alliance partner of the present BNP-led government also got an opportunity to dominate in the residential halls. Now not a single BCL activist can enter into the campus since October 2 fearing possible attack on them.
JCD and ICS leaders and workers also forced the university authorities to postpone the Syndicate meeting for an indefinite period.

Closure of handloom industries renders five lakh jobless

UNB, Narsingdi

Five lakh people are passing their days with unemployment as at least two lakh traditional handloom industries in nine upazilas of Narsingdi, Brahmanbaria and Narayanganj remained closed for the last 15 years.
Eighty per cent of the handloom factories have been closed due to unabated smuggling of Indian yarn into the country, shortage of working capital, natural calamities, high price of yarn and colour, lack of loan and proper assistance from the concerned authorities and toll collection by local miscreants.
Over 1.5 lakh handloom factories are totally lying inoperative during the recent years because of smuggling of Indian yarn and devastating flood.
The handloom industries, which have the ability to run with its small amount of capital, are on verge of collapse, as its low quality products

cannot compete in local markets.
Once these three districts were famous for the production of sarees, lungie and gamchha, towels used by ordinary people but the production of these items decreased resulting in severe crisis in this traditional industries for the last five years.
A worker at Baduarchar village in Sadar upazila told that flood affected families connected with the industry at the village had submitted written applications to the authorities concerned seeking funds for rehabilitation of their damaged factories six months ago, but no initiatives have been taken till date.
Weavers said that they are being forced to purchase yarn at high prices owing to lack of proper policy of government in distribution of yarn.
Huge quantity of Indian yarn are entering into local markets through different border areas everyday which are selling with the direct assistance of

law enforcing agency, the sources alleged adding that market prices of Indian yarn are also being controlled by them.
Abdul Mannan, a weaver at Sagardi village in Sadar upazila told that he started a factory with six looms in 1972, but incurred huge loss due to price-hike of yarn, dye and lack of capital. At present he is working with two looms.
The poor weavers called upon the authority to provide interest-free loan and supply yarn at fair prices to them for the existence of this traditional industry.
They also urged the government to set up purchasing centres in different parts of the region and take initiative to purchase their products through the centre immediately for running their business smoothly.

Banana output comes down in Narsingdi

UNB, Narsingdi

Despite bright prospect of banana cultivation in Narsingdi, the production of this highly nutritious fruit has been decreased during the last few years.
Recurrent natural calamities like flooding, drought and tornado, lack of patronisation and motivational work have been attributed to the reduction of banana production.
Official sources said popular varieties of banana like Sagar, Sabri, Chapa, Humai and Gara-banadar used to be produced on 38,000 acres of land in six upazilas, but it has come down to 25,000 acres of land at present.
Growers said many of them have already shifted to other crops and seasonal vegetable cultivation as they sustained loss in banana cultivation.
They also told that with proper initiative and patronisation from the government they could earn Tk 20,000 to 23,000 by investing only 15,000 on each acre of land.
It may be mentioned that following a small scale motivational programme, about 56 marginal growers were encouraged to plant high yielding variety of banana which helped slight increase of its production in some areas.
According to experts, banana cultivation has a bright prospect

considering its multipurpose use. The banana plants can be used in making bags, packaging materials and mats. They also said if the cultivation is properly encouraged, a good number of unemployed youths can earn a lot by banana cultivating.
Many fallow lands and water-logged areas could be brought under banana cultivation if the authority concerned takes proper steps, they added.
The growers said they could produce export quality banana of different varieties if the government provides them financial and technological assistance.
No job for day labourers
UNB, Dinajpur
The day labourers of 13 upazilas of Dinajpur have been passing their days in great hardship due to lack of job opportunities.
the labourers who used to take up rickshaw pulling, porting and other petty jobs have now engaged themselves mostly in begging to eke out their living.
Market sources said trading at hats and bazaars of the district has decreased alarmingly leaving the workers mostly jobless.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Some people pass through a bamboo made bridge erected on an underconstruction bridge at Bakultala in Tongibari of Munshiganj. People of the area suffer a lot due to non-completion of the bridge within the stipulated period. Locals demand immediate completion of the bridge.

Literacy programme faces setback

UNB, Chapainawabganj

Literacy programme of Chapainawabganj under the Total Literacy Movement (TLM) may not be completed within the stipulated time due to lack of budget allocation.
"Alokon Nawabganj", the district's TLM programme, was undertaken in 1999 with a target to remove the curse of illiteracy from the northern district within 2001.



PHOTO: ABDUL MATIN FAKIR

Different socio-cultural organisations place wreath at the grave of rural poet Jasimuddin on the occasion of the 99th birth anniversary of the celebrated poet of Indo-Bangla-Pak sub-continent at Gobindapur on the outskirts of Faridpur town recently.