

## NEWS SNAPS

### Six killed in Bagerhat road mishap

UNB, *Bagerhat*

Six people were killed and 30 others injured when a bus fell into a roadside ditch at Kamar village in Mollahat upazila of Bagerhat early Wednesday.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when the driver of the Dhaka-bound night coach lost his control over the steering at 3.30 am, killing six on the spot. The dead were identified as Mansur Ali, 79, Sona Mia, Fazr Ali, 85, Badshah Mia, 80, Abdur Rashid, 55, and Siddiqur Rahman. Of the injured, one was admitted to Mollahat Upazila Health Complex and one to Khulna Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

### Price of fertiliser up

UNB, *Jhenidah*

Overall farming in the country's southwestern region is facing a serious setback due to non-availability and higher price of pure fertilisers.

Farmers have been compelled to apply smuggled spurious fertilisers in their croplands. Huge quantum of adulterated Indian SSP fertiliser and potash are being smuggled into the country everyday and sold to the growers with higher price. Farmers alleged that local dealers sell the spurious fertilisers in the name of American TSP and it is difficult for the growers to identify the pure or spurious ones. The dealers buy each 50-kg bag of TSP and potash at Tk 300 and sell at Tk 550 and 425 respectively.

### Two electrocuted in Satkhira

UNB, *Satkhira*

Two people were electrocuted and one suffered severe injuries at Binerpota area in Sadar upazila of Satkhira recently.

Rakhal Sarder, 35, Amit Kumar, 42, and Santosh Kumar suffered severe injuries when they came in contact with a live electric wire during repairing a motor at a field of the area. With critical condition, they were rushed to sadar hospital, but Rakhal Sarder and Amit Kumar succumbed to their injuries. Santosh was undergoing treatment at the hospital.

### Boy suffers splinter injuries

UNB, *Barisal*

A boy suffered splinter injuries in a bomb explosion on Saw Road in Barisal town Tuesday.

Police said the 4-year-old boy, Shakil, picked up a small lovely can while he along with his other was passing by the area at about 9.30 am. But the can containing explosives went off when the mother pressed the boy to throw it out. The little boy, who suffered burn injuries in his hands and chest, was being treated at Barisal Medical College Hospital. The mother was also slightly injured in the explosion. With this incident, three little boys were injured in explosions of abandoned bombs in Barisal town this month.

### Hindu community members harassed

UNB, *Panchagarh*

An organised gang of criminals allegedly in cooperation with local police were trying to blackmail some villagers threatening to implicate them in the murder case of a converted Muslim at Kamarpara village in sadar upazila of Panchagarh.

According to villagers, Ananta Roy, 20, of the village was killed on Jan 7 as he embraced Islam. Meanwhile, police arrested his brother Sachindra alias Jongalia in connection with the murder. But the miscreants are now threatening some other members of the Hindu community of the village to implicate them in the murder case unless they pay them money.

### Acute fodder crisis in Madaripur

UNB, *Madaripur*

An acute fodder crisis has been prevailing affecting milk production in four upazilas of Madaripur.

Cultivation is also facing problem as the farmers find it difficult to use the weak animals for tilling their land. Sadar and Shibchar upazilas, most low-lying areas in southern region, went under water with the onset of rainy season creating fodder crisis from Bangla month Ashar. Due to the inundation the growers could not preserve straw and other dried fodder for their animal. Cows and bullocks have been suffering from various diseases owing to scarcity of fodder, local farmers said.

## Jt efforts of political parties needed to curb terrorism

Speakers at opinion exchange meeting in Khulna suggest

UNB, *Khulna*

Speakers at an opinion exchange meeting on "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: What, Why and for Whom" in Khulna on Thursday said expected development of Khulna region could not be achieved due to the carelessness of the ruling parties.

They said terrorism in this region increased mainly for the failure of the two major political parties.

Aiming to reduce poverty and overall development of the people of Khulna, the speakers suggested adequate facilities for export business through Mongla Port and stressed the need for realistic joint efforts of the political parties to curb terrorism.

People's Empowerment Trust (PET), in collaboration with Actionaid Bangladesh, organised the opinion exchange meeting at the Umesh Chandra Public Library Auditorium Thursday morning.

Eminent economist and PET chairperson Prof MM Akash presented the keynote paper on the topic while PET executive director Shishir Shil addressed, among others.

Mayor of Khulna City Corporation Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, Khulna University Vice Chancellor Prof M Abdul Qadir Bhuiyan, Khulna Unnayan Sangram Samonnoy Parishad leader Abu Mohammad Ferdous,

Advocate M Enayet Ali, ADAB (Khulna) chairperson Kazi Wahiduzzaman, UP chairman M Rashiduzzaman, KU Economics Discipline Head Shahnewaz Nazimuddin and representatives from the civil society took part in the discussion.

Taking part in the discussion, KCC Mayor Tayebur Rahman said local industries would be ruined if we cannot stop smuggling.

He said many people have already established themselves by taking money from the terrorists and godfathers, and if the political leaders are united, many problems would be solved, he said.

The speakers also proposed to expand the Mongla Port and engage a permanent dredger for maintaining its navigability, protect the Sundarbans and develop it as an attractive tourist area, turn the region as a 'Shrimp Industry area' and formulate a national 'Fish Marketing Policy.'

They also recommended to insure distribution of khash land among the genuine landless people, formulate a timely befitting plan for Beel Dakatia, take plan for flourishing the promising flower industry and nurseries of the region, including Fultola area, and formulate plan for development of water logged areas.

Modernisation of the jute and newspaper mills, conducting local and national level survey to find out

the main causes of poverty, ensuring accountability and transparency of the government, activities of local government and NGOs and development of road communication also came up for discussion in the meeting.

## Low-standard smuggled goods flood markets

UNB, *Chapainawabganj*

Low-standard smuggled Indian electronic and electric goods flooded various markets in the frontier town of Chapainawabganj. A section of people are smuggling Indian bulbs, fans, water heaters, tape recorders, table lamps and various wiring materials, and supplying them to different shops in other districts apart from the shops in Chapainawabganj town.

Although the quality of the goods is substandard, people are showing interest to buy them due to their low prices.

As a result country-made electronic goods cannot exist in the markets. But law-enforcing agencies are showing reluctance and encouraging the smugglers to run their illegal business.

## Rare black vulture handed over to Dhaka Zoo

Hunting of winter birds goes on unabated

AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, *Sirajganj*

The Sirajganj district administration handed over a black vulture weighing about five kilograms to the authorities of Mirpur Zoo in Dhaka on Friday.

The bird was recovered from the house of Babar Ali Sarker of village Chandidasgati in Sadar upazila of Sirajganj.

According to the inmates of that house, earlier the heavy winter bird fell down from the sky inside the bamboo cluster of Babar Ali. At this stage Sultana, the college going daughter of Babar and her younger sister witnessed the scene and caught the bird.

Hundreds of people from all around gathered there to see the rare scene. They think that the bird came from the Siberian region. Its wings are very large.

It is interesting to note that the bird ate two kgs of beef at once when the curious people gave the bird to take the same.

Meanwhile, indiscriminate hunting of guest birds is continuing along the Kazipur shoal area, Chalan beel (a water body) and Chowhali shoal areas.

Like previous years thousands of guest birds have started arriving in these areas since the beginning of winter this year. Migratory birds, our flying guests in the winter, have

been crowding the shoal lands along the Jamuna riverside, Kazipur shoal, Chalan beel and Chowhali shoal areas. These migratory birds coming from the Siberian region due to severe cold are taking shelter in these areas in search of comparatively warmer places.

The migratory birds, which are seen in the areas are of various species. Besides, professional as well as amateur bird hunters are rushing to these places, where the migratory birds are taking shelter sensing their presence in a bid to kill those. Some of the hunters also hunt the birds and sell them in the markets and on different footpaths of Sirajganj. There are different ways of hunting the birds. Some hunters use guns and some other cages to hunt the birds. They also apply a number of other methods to net the guest birds.

The hunters do not bother to obey the government ban on hunting migratory birds. There is a law in the country for punishment to the illegal bird hunters. But hoodwinking wholesale hunting of the guest birds is continuing in the region due to lack of strict enforcement of law.

On the other hand, the local administration is maintaining silence regarding indiscriminate hunting of the guest birds. If this trend continues unabated, the

migratory birds would stop coming in the country which would harm the ecological balance, fear weather experts.

According to the naturalists, the migratory birds come to these areas during the winter season flying from the ice-fields in Siberia, thousands of kilometers north of here, to escape the biting cold. While making a day long trip this correspondent saw that the areas have turned into a heavenly abode of guest birds. Some of the migratory birds have been seen plying cheerfully on the sandy fields which have emerged along the river and some have been catching small fishes from water. The scene attracts lots of travellers and local people.

Talking to this correspondent, local people have alleged that natural movement of the guest birds is being hindered by the bird hunters. They have also complained that a section of professional bird hunters hunt the guest birds daily for selling them at the local hats and bazaars despite the government ban on it. They have underlined the need for intervention of law enforcing agencies to ensure safe stay of the guest birds in their temporary winter home.

## Pneumonia claims 57 children in Magura

UNB, *Magura*

Pneumonia claimed lives on 57 children in Magura in last one year since January affecting 5,337 others.

District Civil Surgeon office sources said, seven children died each in January and February, five each in March and April, two each in May and June, six in July, two in August, three in September, four in October, six in November and eight in December.

According to the category 601 children were affected by very severe pneumonia, 1,062 affected by severe pneumonia and 3,674 others affected by child pneumonia.

Apart from pneumonia, officials informed, 265 children were affected by diarrhoea in Magura in 23 days of the current month.

On average 10/15 children are being admitted to hospital with the diarrhoea complication every day, they said.

Doctors said food poisoning, cold spell and bottle-feeding are the main causes for outbreak of child diarrhoea.

## Lack of spare parts 22 deep tubewells lying inoperative in Dinajpur

UNB, *Dinajpur*

Some 22 deep tubewells are lying inoperative in Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur for lack of spare parts causing disruption in irrigation of land.

Farming on 8,000 acres of IRRI-boro land is likely to be deprived of irrigation facilities in the coming season due to the problem.

The tubewells could not be repaired because of non-availability of spare parts as well as financial crisis.

BADC authorities instead of supplying the spare parts have asked the farmers to buy those from the market where most of the parts are not available.

There are about 150 deep tubewells, 500 shallow and 100 power pumps for providing irrigation facilities to the farmers in the upazila.

However, working capacity of shallow machines has reduced as these are used in other purposes like running three-wheeler vehicles and crushing paddy.

Deep tubewell owners are being forced to sell their tubewells and shallow power pumps at cheap rate owing to the problem.

Another report from Jhenidah says: An organised gang stole more than 20 shallow tubewells from different parts of Jhenidah during the last one month.

Villagers said three shallow tubewells were lifted from Dafolbaria and Baniakanda villages in Sadar upazila on Friday night. They said in one incident the lifters tied up the owner Gopal of Dafolbaria and took away his pump machine.

Of the total, 14 shallow tubewells were lifted from different villages of Kaliganj upazila during the month of December while three others from other villages of Jhenidah.

Local people said most of the shallow tubewells were taken away from irrigation fields hampering irrigation work seriously.

They urged the law enforcing agencies to take immediate steps to arrest the lifters.