

NEWS SNAPS

Pneumonia claims 18 babies in Kushtia

UNB, Kushtia
A total of 18 babies died of pneumonia in Kushtia during the last two months. One hundred affected babies were admitted in Kushtia General Hospital in January, 222 in February and 23 more babies during the last three days till Sunday. Child specialist of the hospital Sarwar Jahan Bhuiyan attributed the outbreak of the disease to cold weather and malnutrition. He also said the number of death is increasing due to lack of proper treatment and the affected children are being deprived of proper medical service due to inadequate equipment in the hospital. Many of the affected children are being admitted to different clinics. At least five children died of pneumonia in the clinic during the same period, clinic sources said.

Body of schoolboy recovered

UNB, Bogra
Police recovered the body of a schoolboy from a pond near his house at Khajlal village in Khalu upazila of Bogra on Thursday seven days after his abduction. Police said miscreants picked up Pijush Chandra Barman, 13, a class VII student and son of Punil Chandra of the village from near his house on Feb 27 and demanded a ransom of Tk 2 lakh from his father. Failing to meet the kidnappers' demand, the victim's family filed an abduction case with local police station and police arrested eight people in this connection. Police suspect that the kidnappers killed the boy being failed to realise the ransom and dumped the body into the pond. The body bore some injury marks.

Valuables worth Tk 1.30cr gutted

UNB, Jamalpur
Valuables, including furniture and cotton, worth about Tk 1.30 crore were gutted in a fire at a godown at Bozrapur in Jamalpur town on Wednesday. Fire Service sources said the fire originated at Hasib Ginning Company at about 2 am, but they could not ascertain from where the fire originated. Firefighters had to struggle for about 15 hours to put out the blaze. Sayeed Hasibul Gani Galib, owner of the industry, said there were 1,575 bales of cotton worth Tk 1 crore in the godown.

Pirates loot valuables worth Tk 2 lakh

UNB, Patuakhali
Pirates looted valuables and cash worth about Tk 2 lakh from the passengers of a launch on Buragourong river at Pangashia in Patuakhali on Tuesday. Police said the armed pirates numbering 20 boarded the launch "MV Chalanika" in the guise of passengers at Panpotti. They looted valuables from the staff and passengers on gunpoint when the launch reached Pangashia. The pirates also injured some passengers. Later, they fled in a trawler. A case was filed.

Internet service of BTTB introduced

UNB, Jhenidah
Internet service of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) was introduced in Jhenidah on Tuesday. Bhorer Kagoj district correspondent Advocate Sheikh Selim was given the first Internet connection. The service was formally inaugurated by sending an email to Bhorer Kagoj and BSS office in Dhaka. The billing rate of BTTB's internet service is 50 paisa per minute in peak hours and 30 paisa in off-peak hours. Besides, the subscribers will get free service for the first one thousand minutes.

Close circuit camera set up in Prime Bank

UNB, Rajshahi
Close circuit camera (CCC) has been set up for the first time in Prime Bank, Rajshahi branch, recently. Four cameras have been set up in four corners, which are always taking auto snaps and branch manager is able to see everything, happening in the bank through the monitor set in front of him. Branch Manager of Prime Bank Abrar Hossain Khan said close circuit camera has been set up in all branches of Prime Bank and following this the security system of this branch is now more tightened.

Construction work of cross dam begins

UNB, Patuakhali
Construction work of a 10-km cross dam spending 1,000 metric tons of wheat started on Monday at Mizagani upazila of Patuakhali. Begum Suraiya Akhter Chowdhury, wife of Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, inaugurated the work, which is being done under the food for works programme. Water Development Board sources said about 50,000 people of Mirzagani and Madhabkhali unions would be benefited with the construction of the dam. The dam would protect crops and prevent river erosion, officials said.

Memo submitted to PM

UNB, Mymensingh
Journalists of Mymensingh brought out a silent procession in the town on Thursday protesting the killing of journalist Harun-or-Rashid. The procession started from the local press club at 11am and terminated at the DC office where the journalists submitted memorandum to the prime minister and the home minister through Deputy Commissioner Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury. Before the procession, a meeting was held at the press club denouncing the killing of the journalists and demanding immediate arrest of the killers.

Punishment to killers of Harun demanded

BSS, Rajshahi
Speakers at a protest meeting held at Shaheb Bazar in Rajshahi city demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to the killer of Harun-or-Rashid Khokon, a senior reporter of the Daily Purbanchal published from Khulna. The meeting organised by Rajshahi Journalist and Citizen Community (RJCC), the speakers said crimes like murder, hijacking and rape were increasing alarmingly in the country due to lack of justice. If there had been exemplary punishment to the killers of Shamsur Rahman, journalist Harun-or-Rashid would not have to die. A total of nine journalists were killed in the southern region of the country during the Awami League rule, they said. The speakers demanded security of life for every citizen of the country.

Five-day scout rally inaugurated

BSS, Mymensingh
A five-day 4th district scouts rally began at the local circuit house ground on Thursday morning. Organised by the Bangladesh Scouts, Mymensingh district branch, the rally was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner and president of the district scouts Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury. The Chief Executive Officer of Mymensingh Zilla Parishad A B M Abdus Satter presided over the inaugural function while Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Dr Nazman Ara Khanam and Zilla Parishad Secretary Saiduzzaman spoke on the occasion.

Bridge construction work going on

UNB, Dinajpur
Construction work of a bridge over the river Chhota Jamuna at Fulbari upazila in Dinajpur is progressing fast at a cost of Tk 2.70 crore. Roads and Highways Department started constructing the 92.7 metre-bridge recently after the foundation stone of the bridge was laid on March 23 last year. Earlier the Ministry of Communications asked the R&H department to submit a report over condition of the old bridge. As per report submitted by R&H department, the ministry took necessary steps for constructing the new bridge over the river fulfilling the long-cherished demand of local people. After completion, about 2 lakh people of the area would enjoy better communication facilities.

Collection of land revenue tax declines

UNB, Chapainawabganj
Collection of land revenue tax declined sharply in Chapainawabganj in the current fiscal year. The district revenue office realised only Tk 51.60 lakh as land development tax in last six months of the current fiscal year against the target of Tk 3.14 crore. Of the total, the office realised Tk 48.64 lakh or 30 per cent revenue from the common people while only Tk 2.96 lakh or 2 per cent from the government sectors.

Water supply, sanitation project shelved

Over one lakh citizens in Rangpur yet to get pure water

MOZAMMEL HUQ, Rangpur

How long the citizens of Rangpur Municipality would wait for reaping the benefits of the ambitious "Nine-town Water Supply and Sanitation Project?" Since long over one lakh citizens in Rangpur town were waiting to get rid of impure water supply after beginning of work of the aforementioned project. But all went in vain as the project remains incomplete till filing of this report. Now the project work was shelved for reasons best known to the authorities concerned. Rangpur Municipality with the technical assistance of the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), started the



PHOTO: STAR

Incomplete overhead tank with a capacity of 1,50,000 gallons of water.



PHOTO: STAR

A view of the newly constructed water treatment plant of Rangpur Municipality with a capacity of purifying six lakh gallons of water per hour. It is yet to start operation.

project work in 1996-97 fiscal year at a cost of Tk 10 crore. The entire fund was provided by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The aims and objectives of the scheme was to ensure supply of pure drinking water in the Rangpur Municipality area by 1999-2000. Two years already passed, but still works of the project could not be completed. According to the municipality authorities, works on the construction of three overhead tanks with a capacity of 1,50,000 gallons of water each and replacement of the existing 48-km long dilapidated asbestos pipe lines were lying incomplete. Installation of six deep tubewells, 90 shallow tubewells and 65 km long new pipe lines in fresh areas and construction of a water treatment plant also remained incomplete.

It is to be mentioned that 63-km long asbestos pipe lines were installed across the Rangpur Municipality area four decades back. Of which, 15 km pipelines were replaced while the rest 48-km long old asbestos pipe lines were yet to be replaced. The asbestos pipelines also got burst frequently disrupting water supply in the town. The citizens of the municipality area were being compelled to use impure water supplied through these unfit asbestos pipe lines. Immediate steps should be taken to restart work of the project completing its unfinished work with a view to mitigating the sufferings of the tax-paying citizens.

Tuhin murder
Alleged killers threatening victim's family members

ABU AHMED, Satkhira

Alleged killers of Tofayel Ahmed Tuhin, a fish trader, are not only roaming freely but also threatening the victim's family. Tofayel Ahmed Tuhin, 28, son of Khaibar Hossain of village Kismat Elishpur in Kalaroa upazila and president of Keralkata Union Jubo League was returning home from Chittagong after purchasing hilsha fish. When he reached in front of a mosque near his house at about 11 pm on January 26, a gang of armed miscreants led by Bahauddin, son of Moksed Gazi of the same village attacked him. They threw bomb on the victim and his head was blown away. He died on the spot. Later, Mosharraf Hossain Tagar, uncle of Tuhin, filed a case with Kalaroa thana accusing eight BNP activists -- Bahauddin, Mofazzal Hossain Mofa, Rafiqul, Alam, Amin, Zobaed Ali, Eshar Ali and Sohrab. Bahauddin and Mofa, the two main killers who are reportedly notorious terrorists in Kalaroa area. Soon after the murder, local people chased the killers and caught Mofa whose wrist of right hand was blown away by his own bombs from the bordering village of Echhapur in Sharsha upazila of

Jessore district on January 27. But police could not arrest any other accused including Bahauddin as yet. Rather, the accused are allegedly making threats to complainant and witnesses in the case. But the headway so far, after over one month, in the sensational murder case, was so dejecting that the situation left Tuhin's family members in fear, a close relative preferring not to be named told this correspondent. The relative, quoting eyewitnesses said that principal accused Bahauddin along with his three accomplices had been staying at a village near Kalaroa upazila headquarters in the last week of February. He was found talking with his relative who is the vice-president of Kalaroa upazila BNP regarding the case. Police could not take action against the killers who are the BNP activists, due to 'political interference', it is alleged. Bahauddin has been threatening Tuhin's family by sending letters by post. Bahauddin has threatened them of dire consequences if the case is not withdrawn soon, Khaibar Hossain, father of Tuhin told this correspondent. One elderly relative of the victim

at Satkhira told The Daily Star "We have kept the threat letters and filed a GD with Kalaroa thana expecting it might help a little bit the investigation". While expressing their displeasure over the inertia of law enforcing agency, family members of the victim said, "We heard that police have carried out some drive to nab main suspect Bahauddin and his accomplices immediately after the killing, but to no avail. But that's all about their (police) story of hunt for culprits. It's a sheer pity that not a single clue leading to the arrest of Masud or other killers of the gang could be unearthed by police as yet, they lamented. The family members are now planning to draw the attention of the prime minister and the home minister by holding press conference at Satkhira and submitting memorandum to them. Those bids would be our last efforts to justice. "After that we shall throw the matter into dustbin and wait for natural justice", family members of Tuhin further lamented.

Plight of an acid victim at Kapasia in Gazipur

Attackers move freely in the area

BSS, Gazipur

Over one and a half months have passed but police are yet to nab the alleged acid attackers Anwar Hossain and his three accomplices who threw acid on Selina, 22, on December 19 at village Chardurlab Khan in Kapasia upazila of Gazipur. Fatally injured Selina, wife of alleged attacker Anwar is now fighting for avoiding impairment of her right hand at Thikana, a 20-bed rehabilitation centre of Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) at Banani in the capital Dhaka. Free movement of culprits in the area has raised question among the local people about the role of police in enforcing the strict instruction of the government to deal with acid attackers. Selina who had been working at a garments factory in Dhaka for the last five years fell victim to the attackers when she came to her village home to celebrate the holy Eid-ul-Fitr with her four-year old son Hriday and other family members. Anwar along with his accomplices led the heinous attack on Selina to take revenge on her as he failed to convince his wife to live together at the same village home following strained relations between them for

the last couple of years. Sub-Inspector Sirajul Islam who is the investigation officer (IO) of the case visited the spot on Thursday to talk to the family members of Selina only to fulfil the mandatory provision of preparing the charge-sheet within 60 days. Talking to journalists after undergoing a major surgery at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) on January 29, a distressed and pain-stricken Selina said police instead of taking action against the offenders are maintaining mysterious relations with them. She expressed doubt about getting justice and said without intervention from the higher authorities bringing culprits to book would remain a far cry. Local people are found tight-lipped about the incident, apparently in fear of the attackers. Some of them alleged that the offenders have nexus with the ward no two chaukidar and members of the village police in Barishab union and are freely moving in the area. Almost every evening the attackers gather at Barishab bazaar and gossip publicly, they alleged. Selina's father Suraj Moral alias Shanti Moral said he was afraid of further attack by the criminals as number two accused in the case

Manjur Miah and his gang are intimidating him in various ways. "I cannot move freely in the area as the attackers have been threatening to detain me for taking my signature for harmful purposes," he alleged. Sub-Inspector Sirajul Islam said he took up the case on January 31 and went to the spot the following day to collect evidence. "We are trying to arrest the accused but Selina's family is reluctant to extend necessary cooperation," he said, adding that one local man had told him that Suraj Moral was engaged in a compromise deal on the case with his son-in-law. But he admitted that he had also heard it from local people that the principal accused Anwar Hossain is now staying at his village home. Replying to queries about the delay in apprehending the attackers, OC Meer Fasiur Rahman and duty officer Mohammed Walid of Kapasia thana said transfer of initial investigation officer of the case SI Monwar to Kishoreganj and shortage of manpower are hampering the drive in bringing the criminals to book. There are only two SIs now posted with the thana instead of normal four, they added.

President may open health camp at Kapasia

UNB, Gazipur

A daylong Free Health Camp will be held at Kapasia Pilot High School premises in Gazipur today (Saturday). President Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury is expected to inaugurate the camp, organised by Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB). To hold the camp successfully a preparatory meeting was held with the participation of district and upazila level officials, law and order agencies and local leaders. An organiser said the President is also expected to render treatment to some of the patients during the camp.

Man kills baby, wife at Chandraghona

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A man killed his three-month-old baby and wife at Chandraghona in Rangunia upazila Tuesday night. Rangunia police recovered the bodies on Tuesday night and sent them to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) morgue for autopsies. The victims are Rehana Akhter Renu, 30, a community school teacher, and her baby Amatun Noor.

Police said the alleged killer, Saleh Noor, 35, has been absconding since Tuesday morning. According to police, a neighbour went to Renu's house to watch television at 10:00pm and found the schoolteacher and her daughter dead. Police later came at around 11:00pm and recovered the bodies. "Both the mother and her child might have been strangled," police sources told this correspondent, referring to injury marks around the shoulders and necks of the victims.

Police said after killing his wife and daughter Saleh Noor, who returned from Saudi Arabia two years back, left his house at around 11:00am on Tuesday, leaving the key with his neighbour. Police said Noor had a strained relationship with his wife. Selim Zaman, brother-in-law of Renu, filed a case accusing Noor of the murders with the Rangunia Police Station.

Two killed in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Two women were killed while one person was injured in separate thunder strikes at Belkuchi and Kamarkhand upazila in Sirajganj on Sunday night. Anwar Khatun, 26, was killed on the spot while her husband Zahurul Islam was injured critically when they were sleeping at around 11:00 night at their house at Chandangati village in Belkuchi thana. Zahurul Islam has been admitted at the Belkuchi Health Complex with critical injury. Rahima Khatun, 30, wife of Rustom, was killed in separate thunder strike at Balorampur village in Kamarkhand upazila at around 8:00 pm, when she was working at home.

IU teacher 'sexually harassing' female students

IU CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Students of Islamic University (IU) have demanded exemplary punishment to a teacher of the university who allegedly harassed a female student of the university. It is alleged that Assistant Professor Ashraful Alam of the Al-Hadith and Islamic Studies Department has been sexually harassing his female students since long. Some female students preferring not to be identified claimed that the teacher promised many female students to give high score in exchange of 'anti-social activity' in his own course. He also promised to marry some girl students. A student of the department reported about sexual

Steps to check unfair means in SSC exams in Pabna

UNB, Pabna

Aiming at holding the upcoming SSC and Dakhil examinations in a peaceful and fair manner a preparatory meeting was held at the DC office in Pabna on Monday. Deputy Commissioner Ashraf Mokbul chaired the meeting which decided to take necessary measures to check unfair means in the exams scheduled to begin on March 14. Rajshahi Education Board has formed 103 vigilance teams to check any unfair means and copying in the

examinations in 16 northern districts under the board. A total of 23,404 examinees will sit for SSC exams in the district this year. Besides, 331 examinees of vocational institutes will also sit for the exams. There will be 22 centres for SSC, eight for Dakhil and two for vocational examinations. Board Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam, Controller of Examinations Musa Uddin, officials and heads of different educational institutions were present in the meeting.

Massive boro farming scheme in Jhenidah

DELWAR KABIR, Jhenidah

Boro production in Jhenidah is likely to be satisfactory this year. The climate and fair price of paddy encouraged the farmers to cultivate boro extensively, expressed some farmers. According to a source related to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Jhenidah, they had fixed a target to bring 18,300 hectares of land for boro farming in Jhenidah sadar, 6,000 hectares in Sailkupa, 7,200 hectares in Harinakundu, 14,700 hectares in Kaliganj, 4,100 hectares in Kotchandpur and 19,600 hectares in Moheshpur upazila. Our of total 69,900 hectares, the farmers of Jhenidah Sadar brought 12,905 hectares, Sailkupa farmers brought 4,300 hectares, Harinakundu farmers brought 6,395

hectares, Kaliganj farmers brought 10,530 hectares, Kotchandpur farmers brought 3,365 hectares and Moheshpur farmers brought 14,480 hectares of land under boro farming. The farmers started transplanting boro plants since mid-December which will continue till mid-March. If there is no natural calamities like drought, flood, pest attack or diseases, the farmers may harvest optimum yield, DAE sources hoped. It may be noted here that 70,765 hectares of land were brought under boro farming in Jhenidah last season. Now in the local markets paddy is being sold between Tk 330 to 350 per maund instead of last year's Tk 280 to 300 per maund.

Boro farming on 49,000 hectares in Satkhira

BSS, Satkhira

The cultivation of boro paddy has been going on in full-swing in all the seven upazilas of Satkhira for this current season. According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources, a total of 49,000 hectares of land have been brought under high yielding variety of boro cultivation with a production target of 1,67,600 metric tonnes of paddy in Satkhira this year. The farmers have already brought 19,000 hectares of land under boro cultivation. The cultivation will continue till March 15. Upazila-wise break-up of land brought under boro cultivation with the production target is as follows: 17,300 hectares of land have been brought under boro cultivation with a production target of 59,173 metric tonnes of paddy in Sadar upazila, 11,300 hectares with a production target of 38,650 metric tonnes in Kalaroa, 9,000 hectares with a production target of 30,784 metric tonnes in Tala, 4,600 hectares with a production target of 15,734 metric tonnes in Debhata, 3,700 hectares with a production target of 12,655

metric tonnes in Kaliganj, 2,400 hectares with a production target of 8,209 metric tonnes in Assasuni and only 700 hectares with a production target of 2,395 metric tonnes in Symnagar upazila. Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) provided high yielding variety of seeds of paddy at a fair price among the farmers. The chemical fertilisers are now available and prices also remain stable. Bangladesh Krishi Bank and other commercial banks disbursed necessary loans among the farmers for making the programme a success. Besides, a total of 9,825 shallow machine are functioning in the boro field for supplying necessary water for the cultivation of boro paddy. Of them, 3150 are in Sadar upazila 875 in Kalaroa, 3,065 in Tala, 115 in Debhata, 1470 in Kaliganj, 700 in Assasuni and only 50 in Shynagar upazila. Deputy Director of DAE, Satkhira Md Shahabuzzaman told that the target of boro paddy production is expected to be exceeded, if the climate remain congenial in the next few months.



Meherpur journalists parade the streets of the district town protesting the killing of Harun-or-Rashid, a newsman of Khulna. Harun was murdered recently by unidentified assailants.