

NEWS SNAPS

Two killed in separate incidents

UNB, *Rajbari*

Two people were killed in separate incidents in Goalanda and Baliakandi upazilas of Rajbari on Wednesday.

In the first incident, some robbers hijacked a rice-laden truck from Pather Antar crossing on Khulna-Doulatdia highway and strangulated rice trader Majbar Rahman, 50, of Manikganj, to death taking him in another sand-laden truck.

Police on the following day recovered the rice-laden truck from near the Chandani Bridge in Sadar upazila. A case was filed with police. In another incident, a man was beaten to death by rivals over previous enmity at Nalia Jamalpur village in Baliakandi upazila. Shamsur Rahman, 65, of the village was injured critically as he was beaten mercilessly by his rivals. He was taken to Faridpur Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. A case was filed with police who arrested three people in this connection.

BDR jawans recover Bangladeshi currency

UNB, *Jhenidah*

BDR jawans recovered Bangladeshi currency notes amounting to Tk 10 lakh from the border of Moheshpur area the Friday.

BDR sources said the challenged two smugglers while they were trying to enter into the Bangladesh territory near 62 number border pillar along with two bags. At that time one of them fled away leaving his bag in the border and other one returned to India with his bag. BDR, later, found the money opening his bag.

Indian poultry birds flood markets

UNB, *Shariatpur*

Local poultry farms have been facing closure as Indian poultry birds flooded the markets of Shariatpur.

Market sources said, about 3.60 lakh Indian poultry birds worth Tk 30 lakh enter in this small district every year. As a result local poultry farms suffer a huge loss annually and half of the poultry farms have already been closed down. One kgs of Indian broiler is being sold at Tk 70 while local broiler at Tk 80 or above as its production cost is high. Local farm owners said the Indian poultry birds captured 70 per cent of the market.

Shop, house gutted in Laxmipur

UNB, *Laxmipur*

A shop and a house were gutted in separate fire incidents in Laxmipur on Thursday night damaging valuables worth over Tk 8 lakh.

A stationery shop on Sonali Bank road at Raipur Bazaar was gutted at about 1am while a house was burnt to ashes at Dargah in Sadar upazila. According to local residents, both the fires originated from electric short circuits. Firefighters put out the fires.

Primary school dropout rate declines

UNB, *Shariatpur*

The dropout rate in primary schools declined substantially as over 50,000 students have been brought under food for education and stipend programmes.

District primary education office sources said at present the number of primary students in six upazilas of Shariatpur is 1.62 lakh. Of them 50,000 poor students are getting foodgrains and stipend. Of the recipients, 40 per cent are getting Tk 20 as stipend and 60 per cent 15 kgs of wheat per month.

Four along with phensidyl arrested

UNB, *Patuakhali*

Police arrested four people along with 30 bottles of phensidyl from a house in Kalikapur area in Patuakhali town Thursday.

Police said acting on a tip off, they arrested Mohammad Mustafa, Jiad, Ekubar and Atiar Rahman from the house of Sikender of the area. Another report from Dinajpur adds: BDR jawans arrested a man along with 3, 129 bottles of phensidyl from Bheramalia village of Nobabganj upazila on Thursday. A case was filed.

Surprising twist in Tuesday's incident

BNP activists sue 52 villagers of Kachuapara in Natore

ANWAR ALI, *Rajshahi*

At least 52 villagers of Kachuapara in Tanore upazila who were attacked allegedly by the ruling party men on Tuesday night, were charged in two cases for disrupting irrigation in the Barind areas and for terrorism on Friday.

Of the 52 accused, Kamargaon union parishad chairman Abdullah Al Mamun, a local Awami League leader was charged with both the cases filed by BNP activists Ansar Ali and Tomij Uddin.

Tomij Uddin lodged a case against 30 villagers accusing them under 307 and 326 sections of Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC) for armed attack.

Ansar Ali lodged another case against 22 persons. The accused were charged under 143, 323, 325, 430 and 114 section of BPC for interrupting lifting of ground water and resisting works of Barind Multipurpose Development Project.

A group of people equipped with lethal weapons and backed by police captured several pumps at Kachuapara village late Tuesday night, local farmers

alleged.

They attacked peasants who, on information, came to resist forcible seize of water pump centres by the newly appointed pump operators at the village.

The authorities recently appointed some 6,000 deep tubewell operators, mostly belonging to the ruling party, in the project area, replacing those appointed from the inception of the project in 1985.

The massive project was launched to make 1.93 lakh hectares of land in the drought-hit Barind region arable.

The attackers were led by BNP and Jubo Dal leaders Razzak, Afaz, Barek, Salam, Shafiqul, Ejaj, Shamsuddin, Yusuf and some others, alleged farmers.

Police, however, arrested one of the accused. The arrested was identified as Shiraj Uddin, an AL supporter.

Neither the Executive Director of BMDA nor the SP of Rajshahi could be reached on phone for comments after this correspondent's repeated attempts till 9.00 pm on Friday night.

Problems grip Gopalganj Modern Sadar Hospital

ALIMUZZAMAN MIAH, *Gopalganj*

Gopalganj Modern Sadar Hospital is beset with multifarious problems.

Problems include shortage of physicians, beds and medicine. As a result patients are being deprived of proper healthcare facilities.

About 300 to 450 patients come to the hospital from different parts of Gopalganj everyday. But they do not get proper treatment and go back home frustrated.

Besides, the hospital lacks modern diagnosis facilities including ambulance service. There is no isolation ward for the patients who suffer from infectious diseases.

As the hospital has no adequate number of beds, many patients are compelled to stay on floors and verandas in an unhygienic condition. Sometimes the hospital authorities refuse to admit patients due to lack of accommodation.

The hospital was established during the Pakistan regime with 25 beds. In 1984 the numbers of beds had been increased to 50. Later the number of beds was increased to 100 in 1990. Finally the number was increased to 250 in January 1999.

Scarcity of life saving drugs is another problem for the patients. Patients who get themselves admitted into hospital buy medicine from



PHOTO: STAR

Some patients are seen flooring on the passage situated in between two wards of Gopalganj Modern Sadar Hospital. Accommodation problem is very acute in the hospital.

markets at high price. Sometimes plaster, bandage and other necessary medical accessories are not found in the hospital.

Even date expired medicines are supplied to the patients from the hospital, complained many patients.

The ambulance service in the hospital is in a deplorable condition.

Out of the total of 25 physicians, 10 posts are lying vacant in the hospital for a long time. The vacant posts are Senior Consultant (Surgery), Senior Consultant (Medicine), Junior Consultant (Surgery), Junior Consultant (eye), Junior Consultant (ENT), Junior Consultant (anesthesia) and Emergency Medical Officer (EMO).

When contacted Dr ABM Mahababul Alam, Civil Surgeon of Gopalganj told The Daily Star that although the 50-bed hospital has been upgraded to 250-bed one, yet the facilities had not been increased.

Most of the physicians are busy

in paying extra attention to their patients at private clinics ignoring the patients at the government-run hospital, local people have complained.

The patients coming to the hospital for treatment are often advised to go to particular clinics, alleged patients.

The hospital premises remain very dirty.

Latrines and bathrooms of the hospital are found always overflowing with dirty water. Dogs and cats are found moving in the hospital premises.

The quality of diet is not satisfactory. Patients take food supplied by their families from outside. Besides, the beds, pillows, mosquito nets and bed sheets are unfit for use.

Medical equipment worth several lakhs of taka like incubator and endoscopy machine are lying idle for years together due to lack of adequate manpower.

Pneumonia claims two babies in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Faridpur*

Two babies died of pneumonia at village Bana in Alfadanga upazila of Faridpur recently.

They were identified as male baby—Shazib aged one month, son of Nurul Islam and Rabiul aged 10 months, son of Rahela.

Severe cold and ignorance of the guardians are the cause of this fatal disease.

When contacted a close source of the civil surgeon office told this correspondent that no report of death caused by pneumonia has yet reached the office. "This might be stray incident," he said adding that a good number of medical workers have been working across the district to prevent pneumonia and other diseases.

CMCTA executives

CU CORRESPONDENT

The election of the executive council of Chittagong Medical College Teachers' Association (CMCTA) for the session 2002-2003 was held at its office recently.

All the nominees of the election are declared elected uncontested to the executive council of CMCTA.

Prof Mohammad Manzurul Islam, Head of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery was elected president while Dr Mohammad Abdul Mottaleb, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry became General Secretary.

The other office bearers are: Vice president- Prof Mohammad Abul Faiz, Head of the Department of Medicine, Treasurer-Dr Faridul Islam, Associate Professor of Medicine, joint secretary- Dr Mohammad Shakeel Ahmed, Lecturer of Microbiology Department.

Executive members of the committee Prof Shamsun Nahar, Head of the Department of Obs and Gynae, Dr Mohammad Ridwanur Rahman, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Dr Saifuddin Mohammad Tariq, Assistant Professor of Eye, Dr Mohammad Sanullah, Assistant Professor of Surgery, Dr AKM Manzur Murshed, Assistant Professor of Cardiology and Dr Mohammad Shafiul Hasan, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry.

Obituary

BSS, *Dhaka*

Bashir Ahmed, former headmaster of AKG Sayedul Haq High School, died recently at his residence at Battagram of Amishapara union in Begumganj upazila in Noakhali.

The octogenarian teacher, who was also the former chairman of Amishapara union, left behind one son, six daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

The family members of the deceased have requested all to pray to the Almighty Allah for the eternal peace of the departed soul, family sources said.