

NEWS SNAPS

Youth dies mysteriously in Barisal

UNB, Barisal
A youth died mysteriously in Bhatkhana area in Barisal town Sunday. The victim identified as Manik, 25, was rushed to sadar hospital at noon with critical injuries and died about an hour after his admission. It is not clear how he sustained injuries and what was the reason behind the death. A UD case was filed in this connection.

Nine dwelling houses gutted in Laxmipur

UNB, Laxmipur
Nine dwelling houses were gutted in a fire at Char Lorance village in Ramgati upazila Monday.

The fire was originated from an oven of the house of Foyez Ahmed and soon engulfed the adjoining houses. Local people rushed to the spot and doused the fire. The extent of damage has been estimated at Tk 6 lakh.

Terrorists loot 120 maunds of onion

UNB, Pabna
Terrorists looted 120 maunds of onion and Tk 4,000 cash from a farmer at Hatchali village in Sujanagar upazila of Pabna on Sunday.

Locals said the terrorists led by Afzal Mollah, Bonder Ali, Hatem Ali, Baten Mollah in his absence and looted onion and money from his house. Ishak's mother Momejannessa, wife Jamirunnisa and daughters Eliza, Afroza and Feroza were also injured during the attack.

Forged-currency trader released

UNB, Satkhira
A forged-currency trader was allegedly released from police station with a span of few hours after his arrest.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the house of Abdus Sabur at 11pm and caught him along with 20 counterfeit notes of 500-taka from Hizaliza village in Ashashuni upazila on Sunday. But, the following morning, he was released from the thana. Locals said Sabur is a member of an international racket and engaged in trading forged notes. They alleged that officer in-charge of the thana released the accused taking bribe. OC Shahin Mondol, however, told that police arrested Sabur on suspicion, but he was not involved with such business.

Boro farming on 200 acres in Bandarban

UNB, Bandarban
Some 200 acres of land was brought under boro cultivation irrigating water of newly constructed Kamlong lake in the current season.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board excavated the lake involving Tk 50 lakh in the last fiscal year to extend fish farming and bring 12,000 acres of fallow land under irrigation facilities. Prabir Marmia, a farmer, informed that they have cultivated paddy on 150 acres of land and tobacco on 50 acres this season. Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said, a total of 2,181 mts of paddy would be produced here when 12,000 acres land could be brought under cultivation. CHT Development Board said that a canal will be constructed here soon for proper distribution of lake water.

Lack of irrigation facilities on 74,000 acres

UNB, Naogaon
Some 74,000 acres of land in Naogaon could not be brought under current IRRI-boro season due to want of irrigation facilities.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources, Naogaon would be deprived of 27.39 lakh maunds of paddy worth Tk 12 crore due to the reason. The lands in Niamatpur, Sapahar and Porsha upazilas could not be irrigated by installing deep tube wells or any other means due to existence of hard rock layer under 65 to 70 feet of the surface. Experts opined that artificial reservoirs should be made in the area to bring the lands under irrigation.

Kidnappers sending anonymous letters to Gobindaganj people

K M REZAUL HAQUE, Gaibandha

People of Gobindaganj upazila in Gaibandha are now passing their days in fear of anonymous letters containing demands of large amount of ransom and threat of kidnap.

The western part of Gobindaganj upazila is the den of terrorists. Last month three incidents of kidnapping took place in this upazila and five persons were given anonymous letters containing demands of high amount of ransom. They also threatened to kidnap the receivers of the letters in case of their failure to pay the demanded amount.

On February 12, Ashraf Ali, a village doctor of Pulpukuria was kidnapped by terrorists while he was returning home from market. Later the kidnappers demanded three lakh taka as ransom from the family of the victim who was released on payment of Tk 50,000 as ransom from the nearby Shibganj upazila in Bogra.

On February 15, Anisur Rahman, a 12-year-old son of Feroz Madol of village Dharampur was kidnapped and the kidnappers demanded ransom amounting to Tk 50,000. On February 17, another girl Sathi, daughter of Safizid of village Katabari union was kidnapped. The kidnappers demanded ransom amounting to Tk one lakh. Fate of the two victims are still unknown.

Besides, the kidnappers dispatched anonymous letters demanding one lakh and fifty thousand to Tofazzal Hossain, 40, of village Sreepur and Rocket, 35, of village Naogaon respectively. The kidnappers threatened to kidnap their son or daughter if they fail to pay the demanded amount. Ultimately the kidnappers will kill them within seven days of non-

payment of the ransom, the kidnappers threatened.

Tofazzal, however, filed a case with Gobindaganj thana in this connection. But relatives of the victims rarely seek police help in fear of further torture from the kidnappers.

Forged currency notes recovered from Godagari BSS, Rajshahi

Police arrested two youths for involvement in keeping three forged currency notes of Tk 500 at Sultanganj in Godagari Upazila in Rajshahi on Sunday, police said. The arrested persons were identified as Bablu, 30, son of Lal Mohammad Ali and Rakib, 25, son of Abdul Kalam both of Sarengpur village in the same thana. On information Godagari police recovered three forged currency notes of Tk 500 from their possession. A case was filed with Sultanganj thana in this connection.

Fake bidi factory unearthed in Kushtia

UNB, Kushtia

Police unearthed a fake bidi factory and recovered bidi making materials from a village in Bheramara upazila of Kushtia on Saturday.

Police raided the house of Azizul Haq of Royle Kegarpura village and found the fake factory. They also recovered fake band roll of Aziz bidi and some other bidi-making equipment.

Racketeers active in Kushtia in smuggling firearms

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Rampant smuggling of different types of firearms is going on from across the border through various points in Kushtia.

Racketeers are active in smuggling different types of firearms in these points, sources in the bordering areas said.

These gangs are also keeping relationship with some outlawed parties for their safe trading in the area, source close to the racket said.

The numbers of firearms is increasing day by day which is being used in different criminal activities inside the country. These gangs smuggle firearms inside the country. They are also supplying it to other parts of the country according to demand of the buyers, one of the gang members said on condition of not to be quoted.

The rate of the firearms at the border areas are as follows: a sub machinegun is being sold from Tk 50,000 to Tk 1 lakh. Price of a light machinegun is Tk 60,000 to Tk 1 lakh, foreign made pistol Tk 25,000-Tk 50,000, but the price of such foreign made pistol in the local market is Tk 80,000. Indian made various arms are being sold within Tk 1,500 to Tk 10,000.

As a result, the illegal firearms are going to the hands of teenagers, which are the main cause of increasing terrorism in the north-western region of the country. The smuggled firearms which are coming into the country are mostly made in China, USA, Czech Republic and India. Then arms which are being smuggled into Bangladesh through the borders of India include eight-shooter guns,

sawn-off rifle, sub-machineguns, light machineguns, pistol and Indian made arms like pipe guns, muscat rifle, pistol, revolver.

Sources close to the border areas said the groups are well-organized and using at least seven border points adjacent to Kushtia. They are Chilamari, Ramkrishnapur, Mohampur, Thotarpura, Jamalpur, Bilgathua and Vogiot.

The gangs maintain ties with Indian smugglers and continue the trade by managing the members of the security forces of both the countries in the borders.

Terrorists in Kulna division surrendered along with arms during the past Awami League regime in response to the general amnesty. A total of 1,939 illegal firearms were surrendered. According to officials, most of the seized firearms were Indian made and were brought in Bangladesh through illegal smuggling.

One of the district police official told this correspondent that over 5,000 illegal firearms are available in Kushtia and most of those were smuggled into the country through India.

This official seeking anonymity said the terrorists mostly choose Indian made arms because of its easy availability and the normal price rate varies from Tk 1,500 to Tk 10,000.

The gangs usually use consignment of fruits, eggs, rice, vegetables and other items to smuggle in the illegal firearms. Even, Border Security Forces (BSF) of India and BDR of Bangladesh ignore to check the smuggled consignments of goods because of underhand deal.

A large number of firearms are

also going to the hands of the outlawed party cadres. As a result they are growing more powerful in the area. They have started further the terrorist activities in the areas.

Laxmipur Jubo League leader's house burnt

UNB, Laxmipur

The house of a local Juba League leader was burnt to ashes as terrorists set fire to it at Latifpur village in Sadar upazila of Laxmipur Saturday night.

Family sources said the miscreants swooped on the house of Juba League leader Nazrul Rahman of the village and failing to catch him set fire to his house. Nazrul's father alleged that the hoodlums have been threatening to kill Nazrul for the last few months for which he was compelled to remain in hiding.

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Fund needed for works on 13 fire service stations in Sylhet

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI, Moulvibazar

A project for establishing 13 fire service and civil defence stations in Sylhet division faces setback due to shortage of fund.

The government decided to establish 13 fire service and civil defence stations at upazila level of Sylhet, Hobiganj, Sunanganj and Moulvibazar in Sylhet division. Fund was also sanctioned for these fire stations at the initial stage. These stations are at South Surma, Zakiganj, Golapganj, Bariabazar, Fenchuganj, Jaintapur and Balaganj of Sylhet, Madhabpur and Nabiganj of Hobiganj, Chhatak and Jagannathpur of Sunanganj and Baralekha and Kamalganj of Moulvibazar.

In the 1995-96 fiscal year fund amount of Tk 10 lakh was sanctioned for each of these stations. Land requisition was completed and in some cases construction work was started with this money. But within a few months the construction works were closed.

Besides this, an amount of Tk 10 lakh was sanctioned for South Surma, Tk 5 lakh for Zakiganj, Tk 8 lakh for Bariabazar, Tk 6 lakh for Balaganj, Tk 23 lakh for Baralekha and Tk 20 lakh was sanctioned for Nabiganj station.

Traders want extortion-free atmosphere in Natore

ANWAR ALI, Natore

Several thousand businessmen of Natore laid siege in front of the office of Deputy Commissioner (DC), Natore in support of their 4-point demands.

All the business activities of the town came to a halt for five hours as the businessmen with bamboo-sticks and whistles (identical to their organisation) went to the DC office in a huge procession closing shutters of their trade houses recently.

The Terrorist Extortionist

and arrest of extortionists, building a narcotics-free Natore and closure of all type of narcotics businesses, immediate action of the law enforcing agencies against the armed cadres and extortionists, and dredging the historic river of Narod.

Later leaders of 26 units of TERAC addressed a rally with its president Abdus Salam in the chair.

As fund was sanctioned for Golapganj, Jaintapur, Fenchuganj, Jagannathpur and Kamalganj stations which were also proposed and included in the project. Though initial fund was sanctioned in favour of Golapganj, Bariabazar, Nabiganj and Balaganj, fire stations, yet the construction work was not started due to same legal reasons.

If the government sanctions fund for completion of the construction work of these fire service stations, large number of people of Sylhet region will be benefitted. Not only fund, but also more manpower will be needed for construction of these stations. In each of these stations at least 25 posts of different posts should be created. These posts in each station are: One Station officer, 3 leaders, 4 drivers, 16 firemen, one cook and one masachi.

People of Sylhet division are demanding implementation of the project of 13 proposed Fire Service and Civil Defence Station.



Activists of Jatiyatabadi Sechhaseb Dal led by the district BNP president and freedom fighter Ashraf Uddin Khan parade the streets of Netrakona in a colourful procession. Sechhaseb Dal arranged it recently to create public awareness against usage of polythene bags and building public opinion in favour of jute bags for maintaining the environmental equilibrium.

PHOTO: STAR