

## NEWS SNAPS



PHOTO: STAR

Mahbubur Rahman, District and Sessions Judge of Satkhira planting a sapling in front of the court building as part of an afforestation drive.

### Tk 9cr power bill unrealised in Sherpur

UNB, Sherpur

Electricity bill amounting to Tk 9 cr have been lying unrealised in Sherpur under the Sherpur Divisional Power Development Board. Of the total amount, Tk 5 cr was lying outstanding in Sadar upazila alone. Power Development Board (PDB) sources said out of the target to realise Tk 2.20 cr, only Tk 1.82 cr arrears were realised during the last fiscal.

Official sources said they snapped 855 connections for non-payment of bills amounting to Tk 45.75 lakh during the period. They also said they filed 13 cases and served 18 legal notices to subscribers for non-payment of bills of Tk one cr. It was learnt that some big defaulters remained out of official action due to their underhand deal with some dishonest officials.

### Postmaster sued for stealing visa

UNB, Cox's Bazar

A case was filed against the postmaster and peon of Morichcha bazaar post office in Ukha upazila for stealing a visa sent from Saudi Arabia. The case was filed against postmaster Meher Ali and peon Mohammad Yunus Bhulu on Thursday.

Police said Kamaluddin, son of Haji Syed Ahmed, who is living in Jeddah recently sent a visa for his younger brother by registry post in the name of his father. But Haji Syed Ahmed received the open envelope on July 24 and went to the postmaster and inquired about the missing visa but the postmaster and peon refused to give the same. Haji Syed Ahmed informed the police about the matter. After preliminary investigation police filed a case against them.

### C'nawabganj safe route for smuggling

UNB, Chapainawabganj

Various frontiers of Chapainawabganj are being used as safe routes to smuggle gold to India. A section of jewelry traders with the help of transport workers and people in the bordering area smuggle gold worth crores of taka to India every month.

Women are considered as safe carriers to hand over the precious metal to the destinations at the Indian side. One carrier is not used repeatedly so that the members of the law enforcing agencies could not mark them. They even come from Dhaka via different routes as passengers. Khaserhat-Binodpur, Ranihati, Hayatpur and Sona Masjid frontiers have become a safe route for smuggling gold to India.

### Valuables worth Tk 5 lakh looted

UNB, Magura

Valuables worth about Tk 5 lakh were looted and 10 passengers injured in a robbery in a night coach at Alamkhali in Sadar upazila on Magura-Jhenidah road recently. According to a delayed report, a gang of robbers boarded the Dhaka bound night coach from Khulna on the night of July 27 and when the coach reached the point they beat the passengers indiscriminately and decamped with cash and valuables at gunpoint.

# Katakhali canal in Sirajganj needs reexcavation

AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj.

An environmental committee was formed in Sirajganj recently which is headed by the local municipality chairman.

The new committee organised a press conference at the municipality and demanded immediate eviction of illegal land grabbers and re-excavation of the historic Katakhali canal.

The committee also submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia who visited here recently to see the flood affected areas herself. In the memorandum the committee demanded immediate reexcavation of the canal and removal of illegal occupiers. The committee sought it for the interest of healthy environment of Sirajganj town and its surrounding areas.

The land grabbers are also trying to establish their illegal occupation applying their undue influence.

It is worth mentioning that after the formation of the four-party alliance government, Sirajganj SadarAC (land ) instructed the illegal land grabbers to immediately remove their unauthorised occupation. But after the lapse of three months no tangible action was taken till filing of the report due to reasons unknown to all.

The British government dug the long canal named "Katakhali canal" which was connected with the Jamuna river. The British Government dug it for the preservation of environment and also for the interest of trade and

commerce. At that time Sirajganj was termed as second Calcutta because of its importance as a major centre for trade and commerce. Jute was the main trade of businessmen who used to run their business from here to Calcutta. British and Indian traders built many business centres on both sides of this 'Katakhali' canal.

Labourers came here from Bihar and excavated this canal. Country-made boats, launches and steamers used to ply along this canal. Fish of different species were also available in great quantity at that time. The canal divided the eastern and western part of the district town.

So, the British governor Sir Iliot constructed a beautiful bridge over this canal which is called the Iliot Bridge or "Baro pool."

In the decade of sixties the then President of former Pakistan Ayub Khan established Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and built the Bramhaputra Flood Control Embankment stretching from Bera in Sirajganj to Kaunia in Rangpur. But now this canal is virtually dead as it has no connection with the Jamuna.

After the liberation of Bangladesh some local influentials grabbed land of the canal and built residential and business centres. But the officials concerned are indifferent to check the illegal activities. Now in fact there is no existence of the original canal.



PHOTO: STAR

A culvert on Dhubaura-Goshgaon road in Mymensingh collapsed five years ago, but it is yet to be repaired. Local people suffer a lot, especially in the rainy season due to lack of a bridge.

## Eco-tourism complex in Khagrachhari planned

UNB, Khagrachhari

Environment and Forest Minister Shahjahan Siraj Wednesday said an eco-tourism complex with ultra-modern tourist amenities would be set up in Alutilla, the natural beauty-spot of Khagrachhari.

While inaugurating a tree fair at Alutilla the minister said the entire CHT would be developed through creation of resources and eco-tourism facilities.

Presided over by DC Majibur Rahman the inaugural function was addressed, among others, by State Minister of the ministry Jafrul Islam Chowdhury, local MP Wadud Bhuiyan, Zila parishad chairman Nakkhatra Lal Devbarman, poura chairman Mengkaching Chowdhury, Ramgarh Municipality chairma Belayet Hossain Bhuiyan and local Jamaat leader Syed Abdul Momen.

Later a colourful rally led by the minister was brought out, said an official release.

The minister also asked the authority concerned to issue permit to the people of hilly region as per their demand to collect timbers from their landed property to enable them to maintain their living. But he cautioned that cutting of trees of the reserved forest would not be allowed.

He later took part at the tree planting programme in the Alutilla area.

### 5 girls rescued from hotel

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Police in a raid on a hotel in Cox's Bazar town rescued five teenage girls and arrested 17 sex workers along with five pimps Wednesday night.

Police raided the hotel, "Queen", and rescued the five underage girls who once worked in a garment factory in Dhaka.

## Lawyers protest decision of court fee-hike in dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawyers in various districts protested the recent decision of court fee-hike.

**Our Moulvibazar correspondent reports:** Lawyers in Moulvibazar have observed the 'Justice Day' declared by the Bangladesh Bar Council recently.

The day was observed to press home the demand for withdrawal of the decision to enhance price-hike of stamps and court fees.

The lawyers here boycotted the courts and all court related activities. They also brought out a protest procession. The processionists paraded the main streets of the district town. Leaders of Moulvibazar Bar Association also held a press conference on the occasion.

Advocate Tazammul Hussain, General Secretary of Moulvibazar Bar Association read out a written statement in the press conference where he demanded, on behalf of the lawyers and justice seekers of Moulvibazar, to withdraw the decision of court fee-hike to ensure justice to all. He also

announced that all the programmes of the Bangladesh Bar Council will be observed in Moulvibazar with a view to implementing their demands.

Advocate Abdul Khaliq, President of the Moulvibazar Bar Association and Advocate Kishori Pada Deb Shaymal, Vice President were also present in the press conference.

**Our Magura Correspondent reports:** As a part of the country-wide programme of 'Judgement Day', Magura district Bar Association also organised a procession in the town in protest against the increase in price of court fee, vat on lawyers' income, misinterpretation of section 54 and 167 of crpc.

The lawyers headed by Shafiqul Islam Mohon and Abdur Razzak, President and General Secretary respectively of the association submitted a memorandum including the lawyers' six-point demands to submit to the Prime Minister through the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Magura. Afterwards, the lawyers held a

press conference at the office of the association.

**Our Gaibandha correspondent reports:** Local lawyers protested the recent decision of price-hike of court fees held a meeting in front of the court building.

Presided over by the President of Gaibandha Bar Association Advocate Sekender Azam, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Advocate Faruk Ahmed Prince, General Secretary of Gaibandha Bar Association, Advocate Abdul Jalil Akanda, Advocate Siddiqui Islam Ripu, Advocate Hafizer Rahman Faruk, Advocate Golam shaheed Ranju and Advocate Abdul Mannan.

The speakers said that most of the people in Gaibandha lead a sub-standard life because of poverty. They will simply be deprived of legal help due to court fee-hike.

They demanded immediate withdrawal of the decision.

Earlier, lawyers and general people brought our a protest procession which paraded the main thoroughfares of Gaibandha town.

### Highwaymen loot 10 night coaches in one month

UNB, Magura

Highway robberies are on the rise on Dhaka-Khulna highway as valuables worth about Tk 1 cr were looted from 10 night coaches on the road in last one month.

Police said over 100 passengers were injured during the robberies which took place in between Daulatdia ghat and Jessore.

On August 10, the highwaymen boarded a Khulna-bound night coach from Dhaka in the guise of passengers and looted valuables of the passengers when the vehicle reached Karimpur in Faridpur.

Hearing the hue and cry of the passengers, local people chased the muggers and caught four of them. They were handed over to police.

## 3 killed in separate incidents in Khulna

UNB, Khulna

Three people were killed in separate incidents during the last two days in Khulna.

Police said the criminals killed a farmer, Shoeb Morol, 35, at a betel nut orchard after calling him out while he was playing cards near the Srifaltala UP office in Rupsha thana at about 10:30pm Friday.

His father-in-law and brother-in-law were killed earlier in which he was a witness. He had also enmity with a man, Gaffar, over the ownership of a pond in the area, family sources said.

Police recovered the body and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy.

In another incident, police said Kamrul alias Kamir, 38, a notorious thief, died Thursday night when he fell into a drain while climbing the wall of Star Jute Mill in Dighalia for stealing.

Musharraf, brother of Kamrul, in a complaint lodged with the police denied the allegation and said that his brother was beaten to death.

In yet another incident Kamrul Islam, 38, whose eyes were gouged out by miscreants at city's Purba Baniakhamar on Aug 10 died at Khulna Medical College Hospital Friday morning.

## Healthcare in city corporation areas

UNB, Cox's Bazar

A daylong workshop titled "Orientation Workshop on Reorganisation of City Corporation Health Department" was held in the tourist State Minister for Local

Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Ziaul Haq Zia inaugurated the workshop jointly organised by Local Government Ministry and Urban Primary Health Care Project.

Among others, Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation A B M

Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Mayor of Khulna City Corporation Sheikh Taybur Rahman, Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation Mizanur Rahman Minu, Director of ADB, Dhaka Office, Toro Shibuich spoke at the workshop.



Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujaheed, Minister for Social Welfare addressing as the chief guest the scholarship giving ceremony of Islami Bank Foundation. The programme was organised by the Faridpur branch of the bank recently and held at Faridpur Municipality Auditorium.