

NEWS SNAPS

Sub-standard food on sale in Pabna

BSS, Pabna
Sub-standard food items are being sold in different restaurants in Pabna town and other upazila headquarters posing a serious threat to public health.

The owners of the restaurants are not maintaining the rules of general health and hygiene. People who took meals in such restaurants were exposed to various diseases. A large number of restaurants have sprung up here and there in the town and village hats and bazaars. But most of the restaurants are not taking appropriate measures to maintain rules of general health. The owners of these restaurants use low quality items for preparation of various food and dishing out those to the customers.

Tk 59 lakh land dev tax realised

BSS, Meherpur
Meherpur revenue department has collected Tk 59 lakh as land development tax from three upazilas in Meherpur in the last financial year.

Official sources said, of the total, Tk 25 lakh was collected from sadar upazila, Tk 15 lakh from Mujibnagar upazila and Tk 19 lakh from Gangni upazila. Realisation of general land development tax for the current financial year was fixed at Tk 68 lakh, officials said.

12 FWP schemes implemented

BSS, Jhenidah
The Fisheries Department implemented 12 development schemes under Food for Works Programme (FWP) in four upazilas in Jhenidah in the last financial year.

District fisheries office sources said, some 660 metric tons of wheat worth about Tk 66 lakh was utilised for implementation of the schemes. The schemes include re-excavation of Fatepur baor, Baghdadanga baor, Sondha beel and Rurnari derelict pond in Moheshpur upazila, re-excavation of Kapashatia baor, Chandpur baor, Kayetpara baor, and Moar Kumer river in Harinakunda upazila, and re-excavation of Saganna baor in sadar upazila. With the re-excavation of baors beels and ponds, the pisciculture facilities have been increased, district fisheries officer, Sirajul Islam said.

Aman cultivation faces setback in Nilphamari

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Aman production is likely to fall short of target in Nilphamari this year due to outbreak of disease in paddy fields.

A total of 1,12,000 hectares of land was brought under Aman cultivation in the district though initially the target was 1,08,000 hectares. The target of Aman production was set at 2,48,250 metric tons (MT).

Making good use of this year's favourable weather, the growers hoped a good harvest, but at the fag end of the season, standing paddy on a vast tract of land was affected badly by disease.

The standing paddy started turning yellow and paddy grains began to fall down even in slight breeze. In the affected fields, no grain came out while in some cases grains were of very smaller size. Even animals were found reluctant to take the disease affected plants as fodder. Although paddy on both highlands and low lands were affected, but the extent of damage in low lands seemed to be severe.

The farmers applied pesticides, but in vain. A 70-year-old farmer named Abul Hossain told The Daily Star with a broken heart that in his long life time he never saw this disease. The entire crop in his two bighas of land were totally rotten. He went on saying in an emotion choked voice with tearful eyes that he would not even fetch 10 kg of paddy this year. Solvent peasant Maheswar Chandra Roy of Ramnagar, about 6 km off Nilphamari town informed that crops on his six bighas of land, out of 22 bighas were completely destroyed due to

outbreak of this disease in paddy fields.

School teacher Wahidul Mollah of Darwani School who is also a solvent farmer in the area told his cultivated crop on five bighas of land were destroyed totally by "Shikar Pacha" disease. Tayab Ali of village Manthana in Kishoreganj upazilla lost his crop on two bighas of land, out of seven bighas and Sirajul Islam of Gayabari Union in Dimla upazila lost crop on three bighas, out of five bighas of land.

Many old peasants held heavy rainfall in mid-Aswin responsible for the massive crop damage.

When contacted with deputy director (DD) of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Idris Ali, he confirmed the massive damage of standing paddy. He informed that DAE was providing necessary counseling and cooperation to the farmers. District plant protection specialist Nazrul Islam told further that this disease generally attacks BR 11 type and Swarna type of crops of Indian origin. Because of cultivation of BR 11 type of paddy on the same field repeatedly, both production and prevention capacity of the land reduce substantially. He stated that "Shikar Pacha" disease is resulted from blending of "Sheath blight" and "Sheath rot". Acidic nature of the field is another reason of the disease. He prescribed Potash dressing and use of pesticide "Tilt" thrice in a day as a possible remedy. Over and above, he laid special emphasis on cultivation of changed paddy variety on the same field.

However, Idris Ali, told this correspondent that the loss in harvest might be recovered as more lands were brought under aman cultivation beyond the initial target.



PHOTO: STAR

State Minister for Relief and Disaster Management advocate Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury visits a stall erected on the premises of the Moulvibazar branch of Bangladesh Shishu Academy on the occasion of the launching of 'Say Yes for Children' programme there recently.

MOULVIBAZAR diary

M'bazar JCD leaders arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The general secretary (GS) of Moulvibazar district Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) was arrested by the Army along with his two associates from Moulvibazar town on October 25.

The arrested JCD leaders are Quzi Abdullah Al Mamun Pervez, GS of the district JCD, Nurul Alam Numan, vice-president (VP) of the district JCD and Abdul Kaiser, member of the same organisation.

Police said the three leaders were arrested by the Army as they were wanted in separate GR cases filed against them during previous government. They were involved with toll collection, it is widely alleged in the town.

In another drive, the Army recovered 42 rounds of bullets of .2-2 bore rifle from the Sultan Pur area of the town. The Army also arrested Shafiqur Rahman in this connection on October 26.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of 'Agni Shikha', a periodical on Durga puja festival of the Hindu community was held at the Moulvibazar Natun Kalibari premises recently.

Presided over by Rupayan Das Pol, Editor of the periodical, the function was attended by Radhika Mohan Goswami, central vice president of the Bangladesh Puja Udjapon Parishad and Principal Dilip Kumer Bhattacharjya, a prominent litterateur who came from Agartola of Tripura state in India as the chief guest and special guest respectively.

The function was addressed by Professor Karunamoy Roy, Dipon Das, Babul Deb and Rinku Chokraverty. Special guest of the function Principal Dilip Kumer Bhattacharjya opened the cover of the newly-published periodical Agni Shikha.

Call to motivate youths to receive vocational training

UNB, Comilla

Industries Minister MK Anwar has urged local elected representatives and concerned organisations to help formulate a plan for rapid development of rural areas through developing the agriculture sector.

Anwar urged the elected representatives to motivate the people, particularly the youths, to receive training on poultry and dairy farming, computer, sewing and other vocational courses.

The minister said this while addressing a meeting on rural development with upazila officers and elite at Homna upazila headquarters Tuesday.

He said vocational training on agriculture and cottage industries could be arranged alongside implementing various infrastructure development projects.

Later, the minister watched the Homna Inter-union Gold Cup Football Tournament and distributed prizes.

Reconstruction work of flood damaged roads

UNB, Jhenidah

Reconstruction work on 70 kms of damaged roads in Moheshpur upazila is progressing well involving an estimated cost of Tk 7.77 crore.

Roads and Highways Department under its post-flood rehabilitation programme is implementing the work with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The roads are Moheshpur-Baghadanga, Khalishpur-Dattanager via Moheshpur and Talshar Bazar-Azampur via Kotchandpur.

Seventy-five per cent work of the roads has already been completed while the rest is likely to be finished by the year-end.

Meanwhile, the department has completed renovation work on 15-km Arpara-Kaliganj road at a cost of Tk 45 lakh.

BARI undertakes new project to help change lot of poor

DELWAR KABIR,

Back From Bandabila, Jessore

Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI) has taken up a three-year comprehensive pilot project to help change lot of the rural poor.

Under the programme, BARI will supply coconut saplings and help people in planting those in large scale with a view to generating income. This will result in change in the socio-economic condition of people.

Three places have been chosen for the purpose. The places are Bandabila in Bagharpara upazila of Jessore, Jamira in Khulna and Chandrapara in Barisal. Initially 150 people (50 in each place) will be involved with the activity.

Dr Pons Batugal, Senior Scientist and Coordinator of

International Coconut Genetic Resources Network, a Malaysia based organisation, informed that it will provide money to the rural poor and disadvantaged, especially woman. BARI will help establish coconut nursery where saplings of improved variety of coconut will be produced. It will help practice inter-crop farming, rear livestock and poultry.

Dr Pons Batugal planted a sapling of coconut near Bandabila High School ground. Earlier, he addressed a 50-member beneficiary group there.

Ayub Hossain, an organiser of farmers who is also the president of the integrated coconut based income generation group disclosed that the Horticulture division of BARI supplied 500 saplings of coconut of BARI Narikel 1 and 2 varieties and 1,000 nuts to produce improved variety of coconut saplings.

Mushrooming of unregistered private clinics

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

There has been mushroom growth of unregistered private clinics in Magura.

But the authorities concerned are in fact, doing nothing to check growth of such clinics due to reasons unknown to all.

The clinics are not able to render minimum service, patients alleged.

Those clinics are also allegedly involved in illegal abortion in the name MR, endangering the lives of many women.

A section of doctors who have been serving at different hospitals and health complexes in four upazilas of the district have set up most of these clinics ignoring the government rules.

Most of the clinics here lack basic infrastructure like equipment, adequate number of doctors and adequate space required by law.

There are 15 clinics in Magura.

Of the clinics, only seven are registered. The rest are being run illegally having underhand deal with some unscrupulous officials.

As per government rule, five rupees, two sweepers, three qualified doctors, an anesthetist, one pharmacist and one mid-wife should be engaged in a clinic.

Besides, a clinic should have a capacity of minimum 10 beds and a modern operation theatre with necessary equipment and air-cooling system.

But only or two junior doctors usually run a clinic in Magura. Most of the nurses allegedly have no proper training from any nursing institute.

Besides, some clinics owners allegedly posted 'agents' in government hospitals to lure the patients to those clinics in the name of better treatment.

Residential Medical Officer (RMO) of Magura Sadar Hospital Akteruzzaman, however, denied free access of private clinic agent in the hospital premises.

But most patients alleged that a section of doctors and staff of Magura Sadar Hospital are engaged in such crime.