

NEWS SNAPS

Wheat allocated for TR scheme

BSS, Panchagarh

The government has allocated 399 tons of wheat to implement various projects under Test Relief (TR) programme in the current fiscal year.

The projects include rural infrastructure maintenance, construction of kutch roads and embankments, earth filling at various schools and colleges, tree plantation and clearing of drains and jungles. The work of the projects is expected to be completed by November, this year. The government has sanctioned 348 tons of wheat for gratuitous relief and 566 tons for VGF programme.

Work on Chandpur hospital goes on

BSS, Chandpur

Construction work of the 250-bed Chandpur Modernised Hospital, to be completed at a cost of Tk 14 crore, is going on in full swing.

The hospital, which was a 50-bed one earlier, is being constructed in the northern side of Stand Road under the supervision of the Public Works Department (PWD). Besides, eight residential buildings will be constructed for doctors and nurses on the hospital campus. The construction of the hospital is expected to be completed by the end of 2003, hospital sources said.

Contraband drug recovered

BSS, Munshiganj

Munshiganj Thana Police recovered 550 bottles of contraband Indian Phensidyl syrup, 78 bottles of whisky and 82 bottles of beer from a ditch in the municipality area of the district Thursday.

None was arrested in this connection. Police said the contraband drugs were packed in nine gunny bags and hidden in a shallow ditch. Acting on a tip-off, police searched the ditch at around 8.30 pm and recovered the drugs. A case was filed with sadar thana in this regard.

Disaster reduction day observed

BSS, Faridpur

International Day For Disaster Reduction, a part of the global programme was observed here recently through holding rallies and seminars at this district town.

A colourful rally was brought out in the town which paraded the main streets of the town to create awareness among the people about natural and man-made disasters, officials, students and members of NGO's participated in the rally. A seminar on "Disaster Reduction for Sustainable Mountain Development" was held in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner. A cross section of people took part in the seminar. The key-note paper on the subject was presented by Assistant Conservator of Forest Md Ruhul Amin.

431 uplift projects implemented

BSS, Mymensingh

A total of 431 projects have been implemented under rural infrastructure repairing work programme in 12 upazilas of Mymensingh. Four thousand and ten tons of foodgrains were allotted for the projects.

District Relief and Rehabilitation Department implemented the projects, official sources said. Upazila wise break-up is as follows-333 tons of foodgrains have been allocated for 26 projects in Muktagacha upazila, 417 tons for 50 projects in Sadar Upazila, 266 tons for 30 projects in Haluaghat, 503 for 49 projects in Fulpur, 363 tons for projects in Trishal, 412 tons for 49 projects in Gafargaon, 381 tons for 49 projects in Fulbaria, 266 tons for 33 projects in Baluka, 249 tons for 20 projects in Gouripur, 311 tons for 31 projects in Issarganj, 333 tons for 41 projects in Nandail, 174 tons for 16 projects in Dubawara upazila.

Work on 944 dev projects going on

BSS, Rajshahi

Works on 949 development projects as committed by the Prime Minister are in progress in 16 districts under Rajshahi division.

This was disclosed at a high-level divisional coordination meeting held on Saturday at Naogaon circuit house with Commissioner of Rajshahi Division Azir Uddin Ahmed in the chair. The projects are being implemented by Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Rural Electrification Board (REB), Education Engineering Department (EED), Telephone and Telegraph Board (T&T), Water Development Board (WDB), Public Works Department (PWD), Roads and Highway Department, Primary and Mass Education Division, Education Ministry, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation.

290 demolished illegal structures beside roads in Magura rebuilt

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

The demolished unauthorised structures on both sides of roads and highways in Magura were rebuilt under the very nose of the authorities concerned.

The structures were demolished during the regime of the Care-taker government.

A total of 290 illegal structures on the lands of the Roads and Highways Department in Magura Sadar, Sreepur and Shalikhha upazilas were demolished during the regime of the Caretaker government.

At least 300 unauthorised structures on both sides of Kamarkhali-Magura-Alamkhali highway, Magura-Jessore highway and Magura-Narail road were rebuilt.

The structures include pucca buildings, tin-shades and thatched houses which are being used as business establishments.

A competent source of the Roads and Highways Department on condition of anonymity told this correspondent, no step could be taken regarding the unauthorised structures due to pressure from the local political and influential circle.

Some illegal occupants claimed, they have been running their unauthorised business in these illegal establishments under a virtual contract with some unscrupulous officials in exchange for a certain amount of money every month.

"I pay Tk 200 per month to the officials concerned every month for my unauthorised structure built on government land," claimed an owner of a shop near Ichchakhavda bazaar on Magura-Alamkhali highway.

"Its on open secret that the officials concerned are party to the encroachment as the authorities concerned are indifferent to demolish the unauthorised structures," said Khan Mazharul Huq a college teacher in Magura.

The executive engineer of the Roads and Highways Department, Magura could not be reached as he was not available in his station on October 29.

Officials in the department, however, admitted the presence of unauthorised structures in different areas of the district.

According to the officials, at present 20 illegal structures on both sides of Magura Narail road, 94 unauthorised structures on both sides of Jessore-Magura highway and 177 illegal structures on both sides of Kamarkhali-Magura-Alam-Akhali highway were raised again after the expiry of the term of the Caretaker government.

They, however, informed that the list of illegal occupants of government was already been prepared and notices were also served for shifting of the unauthorised structures.



PHOTO: A K M MOHSIN

Women workers drying hay for preservation for future as animal fodder. Paddy harvesting has already started in some parts of Munshiganj district.

200 female college students deprived of stipends in Jhenidah

DELWAR KABIR, Jhenidah

At least 200 female students of some non-government colleges in Jhenidah are being deprived of their monthly stipends.

Previously some principals of non-government colleges had been informed by the authorities concerned to send the names of female students of their college. Accordingly, principals of the respective colleges submitted to them the names of female students reading in classes 11 and 12. Authorities of the colleges including non-recognised colleges also filled up the forms for stipends of female students.

But all on a sudden on September 3, the department concerned informed that the female students of

classes 11 and 12 of non registered non-government colleges are not qualified for availing of the educational stipends.

A source related to the authorities concerned said that 34 female students of Bangabandhu Memorial College and 30 students of Jamuna Sikder College in Saikupa and 134 other female students in other upzilas of the district will be deprived of the stipend facilities from January to June this year. This incident has frustrated the female students of classes 11 and 12. BSS from Bheramara reports: Some 850 students of Bheramara Girls' College recently received the stipend money (upabritti), which was introduced by the present government.

Prof Shahidul Islam, MP of Kushtia distributed Tk 700 to each recipient at a function at the college auditorium.

The function was presided over by Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Bheramara and Chairman of the college governing body Shamsul Arefin. Principal of the college Prof Abdur Razzaque, members of the governing body and local elite were present on the occasion.

UP election in B'baria Probable candidates active

BSS, Brahmanbaria

The announcement of time schedule for the upcoming Union Parishad (UP) elections has generated enthusiasm among voters and probable candidates in Brahmanbaria district.

Prospective candidates throughout the district have started early public relations activities through visiting voters' houses to Enquire about their welfare. Some are attending religious gatherings, while others are extending financial help to poor voters to win their favour.

The electioneering is especially gaining momentum day by day in 27 unions under the Sadar upazila of the district.

Sources from rural areas said, some probable UP chairmen candidates are seen contacting with the local ruling party leaders to win their support. On the other hand, a good number of educated youths and student leaders have expressed their intention to contest in the upcoming polls for UP chairmanship. Some have started visiting mosques, particularly on Fridays, to draw the attention of pious elderly people. Some are even allegedly planning to exercise muscle power through hired goons in the coming UP elections.

Female teacher commits suicide

UNB, Munshiganj

A female schoolteacher allegedly committed suicide at her residence in the town Monday night.

Police said Elachi Rani Bhoidda, assistant teacher of Goalkhali Government Primary School, was found dead at her residence near Primary Training Institute (PTI) School. Elachi, mother of a six-year-old girl, lost her husband four years ago. Her body was sent to sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

Pilot project for winter vegetable farming

UNB, Pabna

Local Horticulture Centre with assistance from the World Bank and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has taken up a pilot project for farming of winter vegetable in the district.

The centre has set up 60 exhibition plots of winter vegetables involving some 900 trained farmers from three upazilas of the district.

The pilot project is being implemented in Sadar, Atgharia and Sathia upazilas.

Different types of vegetable, including tomato, carrot, pea, cabbage, cauliflower, bean, pumpkin, garlic and onion, will be produced in the plots.



Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain speaks at the Reunion of Ex-nationalist Students of Rajshahi Medical College at the Biam auditorium in Rajshahi on Tuesday.

20,000 child labourers in Rangpur now go to school

BSS, Rangpur

The number of child labourers in tobacco factories in Rangpur is reducing fast following a number of initiatives taken by the factory owners, non-government organisations (NGO) and the local elite.

About 20,000 out of 30,000 children who used to work in factories at Haragachha bandar in Kawnia upazila and Morneya and Gajghanta in Gangachhara upazila are now going to school leaving the factories.

Seven tobacco factories in Rangpur, meanwhile, have been declared child labour free and the owners of factories promised that they would never employ any more children to work in their factories.

A number of local and foreign NGOs, including ILO-IPEC, US-DOL, ESDO, SEPOC, BRAC and Chinna Mukul Bangladesh along with the local distinguished

persons launched a drive recently to eliminate child labour from tobacco factories in the areas.

As part of the child labour elimination programme, the NGOs have taken up awareness build-up activities, non-formal primary education and micro-credit distribution to help rehabilitate the former child labourers there. About 100 schools have been set up by the NGOs to provide education to the child workers in the area.

According to different study reports, about 45 per cent of the child labourers in tobacco factories suffer from different diseases, including asthma, bronchitis, allergy and tuberculosis. About three percent of them die of cancer every year.

Mamun, a bidi (tobacco) worker of Haragachha, whose children also work in a factory, said, "Even before these schools were set up, I wanted to send my children to school, but due to poverty I could not do so."