

NEWS SNAPS

Sirajganj BNP

leader killed

UNB, Sirajganj
Armed assailants hacked a local BNP leader at village Khamar Borodul in Kamarkhand upazila on Thursday.
Police said the miscreants attacked Borhanuddin, 37, in front of his house at night due to reason unknown, leaving him seriously injured. A case was filed with the police.

Trader stabbed to death

UNB, Comilla
Armed assailants stabbed a trader to death and injured another one in Burching upazila on Friday night.
The deceased was identified as Nikhil Chandra Saha, 42, of village Kadamtali. Police said the miscreants intercepted Nikhil at night while he was returning home from Bharasar bazaar with his brother Shetal Saha and cousin Sadhu Saha.
They later stabbed Nikhil and Sadhu leaving Nikhil dead on the spot. A case was filed with police. Traders of the Bharasar bazaar condemned the killing of Nikhil and demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the killers.

UP chairman's musclemen loot opponent's house

UNB, Narsingdi
Musclemen allegedly at the instance of a local union parisd (UP) chairman looted valuables and cash worth Tk 3 lakh from several houses of his opponents leaving 5 people injured at village Char Madhua in Roypura upazila Friday.
Witnesses said armed lathials (musclemen) numbering 50/60 led by Abdul Khaleq Sikder an ardent supporter of Char Madhua UP chairman and local Awami League leader Kazi Azizul Huq swooped on the houses of eight people including Taher Ali, Basir, Alauddin and Siddique following past rivalry.
They ransacked the furniture and looted valuables from the houses by turns. Four of the injured were identified as Nuru Mia, 30, Basir, 25, Alauddin, 32, Siddique Mia, 50, Nuru Mia was rushed to the local hospital in critical condition.

Winter birds arriving

UNB, Narail
As winter is knocking the door, migratory birds have started thronging in different water bodies of the district.
Different types of birds like dighari, kaldighari, duck, pankoun, buri stork, heron, dahuk, kalkuchi and koraare are found in the beels and haors.
Experts said driven out by chilli weather during the month of November and February, most of the winter birds come from the Siberian region to the tropical countries like Bangladesh.
They also said as many as 580 species of birds are available in Bangladesh, of which 200 varieties are guest birds migrate from Siberia.
But, now-a-days, the number of local and migratory birds is reducing due to unabated hunting by a section of amateur hunters and lack of fish in the water bodies.
Moreover, embankments were constructed surrounding the beels and haors (water bodies) to protect the crops from onrush of floodwaters. But with the advent of the dry season these beels and haors mostly go dry.

Essentials dear in dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prices of essentials including 'iftar' items have shown an upward trend in the markets of Sirajganj, Rangpur, Satkhira and Gopalganj districts since November 7, the first day of the holy month of Ramadan.
Our Sirajganj correspondent reports: Coarse rice is being sold between Tk 12 to 14 a kg, medium quality of rice between Tk 15 to 17 and fine quality of rice between Tk 18 to 24 while other fine varieties of rice between Tk 32 to 40 a kg.
Different types of pulses are being sold between Tk 40 to 44 a kg.
Soyabean oil is on sale between Tk 44 to 48 per kg inspite of tax reduction on the item by 14 per cent while mustard oil between Tk 60 to 65 a kg.
An acute crisis of vegetables has been prevailing here. Green chili is on sale between Tk 35 to 40 a kg, potato at Tk 11, brinjal between Tk 14 to 20, radish at Tk 10, bean at Tk 16, tomato at Tk 50 to 60 per kg, cauliflower between Tk 25 to 30, cabbage between Tk 30 to 40, one kg of papaya between Tk 10 to 12, one kg of sweet gourd at Tk 20, green banana numbering four sells between Tk 6 to 10 and ripe banana numbering four between Tk 8 to 12.
Beef is on sale between Tk 80 to 90, mutton between Tk 130 to 150, chicken weighing one kg sells between Tk 90 to 110 while one pair of eggs of hens at Tk 7, machine made puffed rice (mun) the most favourite 'iftar' item is sold between Tk 26 to 30 a kg, while traditionally made puffed rice is selling between Tk 32 to 40 a kg.
Low quality date is selling between Tk 36 to 40 per kg.

Our Rangpur correspondent reports: Coarse rice is on sale between Tk 13 to 15 per kg while last month it was sold between Tk 11 to 12 per kg, fine rice, according to quality, is sold between Tk 16 to 20 per kg as against Tk 14 to 16 per kg previously.
A rice trader speaking on anonymity alleged that a section of major rice traders control rice markets. Without any reason they have increased rice prices, although rice is abundantly available.
Onion is on sale between Tk 20 to 24 per kg, as against Tk 8 to 12 previously, soyabin oil which was earlier sold at Tk 36 to 38 per litre, now rose to Tk 44 per litre, green chili at Tk 40 to 48 per kg.
Only banana is on sale at much lower prices at T 4 to 8 per dozen (12 pieces), as it grew abundantly all over the district this season.
Our Satkhira Correspondent reports: Coarse rise in being sold between Tk 12 to 15 per kg, medium quality of rice between Tk 16 to 17 per kg and fine quality of rice between Tk 18 to 23 per kg while other fine varieties of rice between at Tk 25 to 32 per kg. Soyabean oil sells between Tk 44 to 46 per kg in spite of tax-reduction on the item by 14 per cent while mustard oil between Tk 60 to 65 per kg.
Pulse of different types are being sold between Tk 40 to 45 per kg.
An acute crisis of vegetables has been prevailing as winter vegetables are yet to appear in great quantity in the markets.
Green chili is on sale between Tk 30 to 40 per kg, potato at Tk 12, brinjal between Tk 14 to 15 per kg, radish at Tk 13, bean at Tk 25, tomato between Tk 40 to 45, culiflower between Tk 30 to

35, cabbage is on sale between Tk 20 to 25, papaya between Tk 5 to 7 a per kg. A slice of sweet gourd weighing 400 grams is being sold at Tk 10 to 12.
Leafy vegetables though not always found is being sold between Tk 12 to 15 per kg, green banana is being sold at Tk 10 to 12 per kg while cucumber is on sale between Tk 15 to 20 kg.
Beef is being sold at Tk 70 per kg, mutton between Tk 120 to 140 per kg Chicken weighing 800 grams sells between Tk 80 to 90 while one pair of hen eggs at Tk 7.
Machine made puffed rice (Muri) is being sold at Tk 25 per kg in stead of Tk 22 per kg a week ago. But traditionally made puffed rice is selling between Tk 28 to 30 per kg.
Date is being sold between Tk 30 to 40 per kg.
Our Gopalganj Correspondent reports: Hilsa fish is being sold between Tk 240 to 290 per kg, Ruih between Tk 200 to 250 per kg, Magur fish is being sold between Tk 150 to 180 per kg, Koi per 'kuri' (20 big size such variety of fish) between Tk 350 to 400 and other fishes are being sold between Tk 120 to 130 per kg.
Price of one kg of beef varies from Tk 75 to 80 per kg and one kg mutton varies from Tk 120 and 130 per kg.
IRRI rice is being sold between Tk 14 to 16 and miniket rice between Tk 18 to 20 per kg, flour between Tk 13 to 14 per kg, Musur pulse is being sold between Tk 35 to 38 per kg, khesari variety of pulse between Tk 18 to 20 per kg, mustered oil between Tk 60 to 70 per kg, soyabean oil between Tk 43 to 46 per kg, sugar between Tk 32 to 35 per kg, cauliflower between Tk 26 to 28 per kg and cabbage between Tk 18 and 20 per kg.

Growers in a quandary as BADC fails to supply boro seeds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Acute seed crisis hampers boro farming in Magura and Rangpur districts.
Our Magura correspondent reports: Due to lack of adequate supply of seeds by the state-run BADC (Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation), boro farming has been facing a setback in four upazilas of Magura district, farmers said.
"We are frustrated as some unscrupulous seed traders are selling one packet of 10 kg seeds at Tk 230 to 250 instead of Tk 150 when acute crisis of seeds has been prevailing in the market" alleged about a dozen of farmers of villages Parauandali, Kasund, and Keshtapur in Magura Sadar upazila.
Concerned sources said boro seed crisis has been created as BADC sales and marketing centres failed miserably to supply it according to the demand of the local peasants.
Local DAE (Department of Agriculture Extension) sources said this year a total of 34,900 hectares of land has been targeted for boro farming for which about 1270 tons of seeds is required. But as most of the farmers here could not collect and preserve sufficient seeds because of damage in paddy fields due to last season's untimely heavy rainfall, this year most of them have become dependant on BADC seeds. But BADC could not supply boro seeds, according to the demand of the local farmers.
In Magura district, two sales and

marketing centres have been opened under BADC. One of the centres is at the district headquarters while another in Sreepur upazila. Besides, a total of 10 dealers had also been appointed in three upazilas of the district. Of them, 4 in Sadar, 3 in Mohammadpur and 3 in Shalikh upazila.
But the centre sought allocation of seeds according to their wrong statistics causing acute crisis of boro seeds here.
Official sources of BADC said they sought 150 metric tons (MT) of boro seeds to the higher authorities. But only 57 MT of seeds have been allocated against the demand here. Of the total allocation, 20 MT had been sanctioned for Magura Sadar and 7 MT for Sreepur sales and marketing centre while the rest 30 MT had been distributed to 10 dealers for selling it at the price fixed by the government which have already been sold within a week of the sales programme which started in the last week of October.
Many complained that the seed dealers sold seeds at the rate of Tk 25 per kg though the government fixed rate had been Tk 15 per kg.
Our Rangpur correspondent reports: Abul Mia, 40, a farmer of Gangachhara told The Daily Star that he is yet to procure his required five bags of boro seeds (10 kg per bag) for cultivation of paddy on one acre of land. He disclosed that he procured only two bags of boro seeds so far from the dealers. In the previous years he did not come to any dealer for boro seeds, but this

year he runs short of seeds. This is because he could not preserve the required seeds due to inclement weather in last year's boro season, he added. Similarly Ebarat, 38, another farmer in the same area alleged that the BADC's appointed dealers are not supplying them required quantity of boro seeds. He had to procure it at high rate from the black market, he alleged. In the black market, a bag of BADC's boro seed is sold at high rate which is between Tk 200 to 300 as against Tk 150, the government fixed rate.
In the remote shoal areas and other places such as Kaunia, Pirgachha, Mithapukur, Pirgonj and Badargonj, farmers are allegedly being harassed by a section unscrupulous seed traders.
In Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha and Nilphamari districts, the farmers are similarly facing an acute crisis of boro seeds.
There are further allegations that adulterated boro seeds are being sold at village markets across the greater Rangpur zone. A section of unscrupulous traders are out to earn huge profit and rampantly selling low variety of Indian boro seeds filling the same in BADC's empty gunny bags.
Price of adulterated boro seeds are much low comparing to the market rate. Poor farmers are procuring adulterated seeds of low price, it was alleged further. Everywhere in the district this situation prevails. Most of the farmers in greater Rangpur district failed to preserve boro seeds for their use due to last year's inclement weather.

Living with natural calamities



PHOTO FEATURE: HOSSAIN SERAJ

Bangladesh is a land of natural calamities. People live here with these calamities. Most of the time natural disasters paralyse normal life. On Tuesday (November 13) such incident happened once again when rains and gales induced by the depression over the Bay disrupted people's normal life in the coastal areas and some other districts. Magura district was also hit hard. The foul weather affected the people here to a great extent. (Pix-1) Some passers-by and rickshawpullers with umbrellas on their heads brave heavy rain and cold weather and proceed towards their destinations, (pix-2) a vendor is strives to protect his second hand clothes at a make-shift shop. (Pix-3) A man covering his body with polythene moves with his buffalo-cart for doing his regular job while (pix-4) people are seen repairing their umbrellas in face of heavy rains with gusty wind.

Robbers beat 12 bus passengers, loot Tk 2 lakh

UNB, Faridpur
Robbers beat up 12 passengers and took away Tk 2 lakh in cash and other valuables from them in the early hours of November 6.
Injured passengers informed that a gang of about nine robbers attacked a Chuadanga-bound bus near Faridpur Agriculture College on Magura-Faridpur highway at around 1-10 am.
Critically passengers identified as Shohag and Zahangir were admitted to Madhukhali hospital in Faridpur while rest of the injured took first aid from the hospital.

Health complex in Kurigram in bad shape

UNB, Kurigram
Bhurungamari Health Complex is plagued with numerous problem, including doctor and medicine crisis, depriving about three lakh people of the upazila from proper medical facilities.
Harassment by naughty elements and attempt to dishonour the admitted patients also vitiated the atmosphere of the hospital creating total indiscipline in the medical system of the upazila.
Only three physicians are working in the hospital against the total posts of 12 doctors.
One of them remains busy with administrative matters for his additional duty in the upazila health and family planning section.
Two other physicians have to maintain the emergency section and indoor beds as well as outdoor patients. Hence, many patients are deprived of treatment facilities after waiting for long hours.
Want of medicine and machinery made the situation worse.
Patients alleged that low-quality foods are being supplied to them.
Meanwhile, there are nine union health complexes in the upazila but none have any medical officer.

Tekerhat now a den for drug traders

UNB, Madaripur
The traditional Tekerhat port in Rajoir upazila known as gateway to country's southern region has become a den for the spurious drug traders.
Drug traders as well as addicts from far-flung areas come here considering the place as safe for them and for easy availability of different types of drugs like phensidyl syrup, heroin and hemp.
Trucks, minibuses and buses carrying phensidyl arrive at the port from other southern districts every day before the nose of the law enforcers, locals alleged.
Ninety per cent drug carriers are husband-deserted woman or widow who are involved with the heinous trade wearing veil over their bodies. They carry 50 to 100 bottles of phensidyl even foreign wine keeping inside the so-called veil.
Phensidyl and other spurious drugs coming in minibuses are generally off-loaded on the Hemilton bridge in Tekerhat or near the western side of Tekerhat-Gopalganj bus stand.
The cunning drug traders as per strategy sometimes change their route. The traders send the drugs from one place to another using various tactics. But no steps have yet been taken to arrest the identified drug traders and their godfathers.

Top criminals in Keraniganj yet to be nabbed

UNB, Keraniganj
Hardcore criminals are yet to be caught in Keraniganj upazila despite the launching of crackdown on the criminals and recovery of illegal arms from the anti-social elements.
Local people are passing their days in utter insecurity as the top criminals and their godfathers are yet to be arrested.
According to locals, 25 killings, 21 abductions, 23 incidents of rape and 15 robbery took place during the last eight months in the upazila

marking the deterioration of the law and order situation but the law enforcers failed to nab any one accused of these cases so far.
Of the 200 wanted accused in CR cases, 250 others by magistrate court and 230 wanted by judge court police could not arrest any one.
Miscreants identifying themselves as army men recently committed four robberies in the upazila, locals added.
The joint force so far rounded up 27 men including three listed criminals.

Bamboo production on the wane in Rangamati

UNB, Rangamati
Bamboo production is on the wane in three upazilas of the district due to lack of proper maintenance and care.
Earlier, huge quantity of bamboo used to grow in the district but at present its output is decreasing day by day although its demand rose with the increase of population.
Locals said no official initiative has yet been taken up for increasing its output.
Forest department sources said 10 to 15 bamboo sprouts come out

from a single bamboo plant if proper care is taken. But at present only three or four sprouts are available from a single plant.
The ignorant farmers uproot the clusters and sell those to the brick-fields at throwaway prices. The bamboo base cottage industries are also on the wane due to acute scarcity of bamboo.
A large segment of population here used to earn their living depending on the bamboo based cottage industry. Recently many people of this industry have been rendered jobless due to high price and acute scarcity of bamboo.