

NEWS SNAPS

Enrolment in primary schools up in Chuadanga

BSS, Chuadanga
A total of 1,38,000 student are now reading in primary schools in four upazilas of Chuadanga under the Compulsory Primary Education Scheme of the government.
Of the total students, 70,000 are boys and 68,000 are girls. Of them, 34,000 students are reading in class-I, 29,500 students in class-II, 28,000 students in class III, 24,500 students in class IV, and 22,000 students in class V. They are taking their lessons from 257 government primary schools, 139 registered non-government primary schools and 17 non-registered non-government primary schools.

Smuggler awarded 3 years' RI

BSS, Thakurgaon
M Ali Haider, Special Tribunal Judge-3, Thakurgaon sentenced one person to 3 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fined him Tk 2 thousand, in default to suffer 3 months more RI for smuggling Indian phensedyl, wine and other drugs.
The prosecution story, in brief, is that acting on a tip-off, police recovered 8 bottles of Indian phensedyl, 2 bottles of wine and other drugs from the house of Ramzan Ali of village Duo Suo in Baliadangi upazila of Thakurgaon and arrested Ramzan Ali. Later, police filed a case with Baliadangi Police Station under Special Powers Act in this connection.

Rapist gets life-term

BSS, Lalmonirhat
The Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression recently sentenced one person to life in prison on charges of raping a little girl, court sources said.
The judge of the special court Akbar Hossain Mridha handed down the verdict convicting Amir Hossain, 42, of village Chawratari of Sarpukur union in Aditmari upazila after hearing the case. According to the prosecution story, Amir Hossain raped the girl taking her in a lonely place alluring her to give a fruit on February 23, 1999. Father of the victim filed a rape case with local police station in this connection.

330 arrested in Rajshahi divn

BSS, Rajshahi
Members of the law-enforcing agencies and army in joint operation arrested 17 persons including two listed criminals from 16 districts in Rajshahi division till November 18, police said.
The joint team also recovered four firearms, 40 bullets and some lethal weapons during the period. Apart from this, police arrested 313 persons from different places in the 16 districts. Two firearms including one country-made pistol was also recovered in Pabna.

8 arrested with smuggled rice

BSS, Khulna
Bangladesh Navy, Coast Guard and Forest Department, in a joint drive, arrested eight persons and seized 603.82 tons of smuggled rice from a cargo vessel in Chunkuri River in the Dacop thana area of Khulna recently.
According to police sources, the joint forces raided a cargo vessel in the Chunkuri River while it was evading customs duty. They seized 603.82 tons of smuggled Indian rice from the cargo and arrested Akram Hossain, Nadul Hossain, Mohiuddin, Khalilur Rahman, Abdul Latif, Motaleb, Abul Kalam and Mostofa. The arrested were handed over to the Dacop Thana Police and the sized rice was deposited to the Customs department. A case was filed with the Dacop Police Station in this connection.

316 licensed firearms deposited

BSS, Narsingdi
In response to the recent call of the government, a total of 316 licensed fire arms were deposited in six upazilas of Narsingdi in 10 days, police said.
The licensed arms include shotgun, revolvers, guns, rifles, and pistols. Of the total deposited, 164 firearms were deposited in Sadar police stations, 55 in Palash upazila, 47 in Raipura upazila and 12 in Belabo upazila.

Work on overhead tank goes on

UNB, Patuakhali
The work on the construction of two overhead water tanks is progressing fast in the municipality area here at a cost of about Tk2.11 crore.
Patuakhali Municipality is implementing the project under DPHE-DANIDA Town Water Supply and Drainage Project. On completion of the project, about 70 percent of 90,000 people of the poura area will get arsenic free water. The construction work of the tank is likely to be completed by December next.

Sanitation programme yet to succeed in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Most people who live in the rural areas of Assassuni, Shyamnagar, Kaligonj, Tala, Debhata, Kalaroa and Sadar upazilas still use kutcha latrines instead of sanitary latrines.
Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supplied sanitary equipment, but they completely failed to achieve the target in the rural areas in seven upazilas and even in the district town due to mismanagement and malpractices prevailing in the department. Lack of public awareness regarding use of sanitary latrines and also poverty are the other causes of failure of the programme.
Moreover, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is spending crores of taka financed by various United Nations (UN) organisations, but could not do anything due to existing malpractice.
People of Assassuni, Debhata, Shyamnagar, Kaligonj, Tala, Kalaroa and Sadar upazilas live in a sub-human condition due to environmental pollution caused by night soils on open spaces on roadsides, river banks, in canals and ponds and near bushes.
Besides, in the rural areas, the cultivators store cowdung adjacent to their dwelling houses and they use kutcha latrines which spread bad odour and pollute the environment.
Moreover, they rotten jute in ponds, tanks and ditches adjacent to their homesteads also cause air pollution resulting in various diseases like dysentery, malaria and skin diseases.

A large number of people mostly children die of these diseases for want of proper treatment. Recently due to environmental pollution a new type of fever has broken out.
Butchers indiscriminately slaughter sick and old cattle and blood, bones and remains of the slaughtered animals are thrown nearby the markets and roadsides spreading germs and bacteria in large number.
Old and sick animals which are mostly brought from India are largely available in the cattle markets in all seven upazilas of the district at very cheaper rates. Beet is now being sold at Tk. 60 to 70 per kg.
On the other hand, shrimp is produced in Satkhira in vast areas of the district and is exported to foreign countries. Heads and other parts of shrimp are thrown at a close distance of the factories and roadside ditches spreading germs and bacteria in large number and causing serious health hazards.
Besides, a large number of bidi factories, hotels and restaurants emit thick smoke which pollutes air constantly. As a result the town dwellers are deprived of fresh air and suffer from stomach and intestinal and ophthalmic ailments.
In Satkhira Municipality the condition of drains and lavatories are very miserable.
Indiscriminate cutting of trees by brick field owners has been hastening the process of deforestation. They cut fruit bearing trees, bamboo roots for burning bricks.
People have asked the government to take positive steps to bring down the rate of pollution.



PHOTO: ANWAR ALI

Hundreds of visitors throng the Khetur Mahadham Fair at Premtali in Godagari upazila, Rajshahi. Baisnab sect of the Hindu community usually organise this fair in the period of October-November every year.

OMS foodgrains in great demand in Rajshahi divn

BSS, Rajshahi

Open Market Sale (OMS) of rice and wheat that started recently in 16 districts in Rajshahi division is going on in full swing smoothly.
More dealers should be appointed in some important bazaars on the basis of demand of the people.
A large number of people queue everyday to buy rice and wheat.
A total of 2060 dealers were appointed for the districts, official sources said here.
Of them, 190 dealers were appointed in Dinajpur district, 117 in Thakurgaon, 99 in Panchagarh, 98 in Rangpur, 152 in Kurigram, 147 in Gaibandha, 120 in Nilphamari, 150 in Bogra, 50 in Joypurhat, 91 in Natore, 161 in Naogaon, 91 in Chapainawabganj, 121 in Pabna,

128 in Sirajganj and 181 in Rajshahi.
Each dealer is being given one ton of rice a day for selling.
The government has fixed the price of rice at Tk 11 per kg and one person can buy highest 5 kg of rice a day.
"As our supplied rice is fine enough and is sold at lower price people are buying rice but due to limited stock of rice some people are not getting the same", the sources said.
No complain or news of corruption in selling rice in OMS programme was received from any corner of the division, AZM Moniur Hossain, Regional Controller (Food), Rajshahi said.
We are happy as we are getting good quality of rice at lower price than the market price, said some low earning people in the areas.
Another report from Rajbari says: The price of rice under open market sale has been refixed at Tk 11 per kg from Tk 12 to give further relief to the poor.
Government started the sale of rice in the open market in 31 unions and three municipalities of the district to keep the prices of foodgrains stable in the holy month of Ramadan.
At least two dealers have been appointed at each union, three dealers in four upazila headquarters and five dealers at the district headquarters.
OMS dealers at union level are selling 500 kg of rice per day. Separate committees have been formed at district, upazila and union level to monitory and supervise the OMS operation.