

SNAPS

NID to cover 5,36,275 babies in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
The 12th National Immunisation Day (NID) will be observed in the district on January 18.
A total of 5,36,274 children will be immunised on the day at 2531 centres.
The programme was announced at a press briefing by Civil Surgeon Dr Ishaq Khan at Dr Milon Auditorium at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital yesterday.
UNICEF's Brahmanbaria Project Coordinator Naima Begum and WHO Subject Specialist Dr. Kazi Hasan Ahmed were present.
A total of 12655 field workers and volunteers from schools, colleges, madrassahs, mosque, Ansar and VDP (Village Department Party) members will take part in the programme.
Children up to five years will be immunised.

RU admission form distribution date extended

A RU CORRESPONDENT
The Rajshahi University (RU) authorities have extended the date of distribution of admission forms up to January 20, official sources said.
Students will have to submit their forms on the same date.
Earlier, January 15 was fixed as the last date of distribution of admission forms while the last date of submission of forms was January 18.
The date was extended following a meeting of the Education Committee headed by the VC on Sunday, said Registrar Abdus Salam.
The students were continuously demanding extension of the date.

'Notorious dacoit' held in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
Brahmanbaria Sadar police led by OC Mia Kutubur Rahman Chowdhury in a special drive at Bhadugar village arrested wanted notorious dacoit Hanif on Monday night.
He was wanted in several criminal cases filed under the Speedy Trial Act.

CUJA office bearers

CU CORRESPONDENT
Rubel Khan of Aiker Gagoj and Kalilur Rahman of Ittefaq were declared winners jointly as both of them bagged equal number of votes in the Chittagong University Journalist Association (CUJA) elections held on the campus on Sunday.
Sarwer Jahan Sumon of Sangbad was elected Joint Secretary defeating Jafar Iqbal of Sangram by one vote.
The other office bearers were General Secretary-Abdul Sabur of Janata, Vice President-Madbul Kabir of Inqilab, Office Secretary-Nurul Azim of News Today, Treasurer-Nizam of Bangladesh Today while Faruk Ahmed of Dinkal was elected a member.
Proctor professor Mujibor Rahman acted as the Election Commissioner. A total of 19 voters exercise their franchise.

Forestry diploma holders' threat

CU CORRESPONDENT
Chittagong Forest College students under the banner of Diploma in Forestry Student Welfare Council (DFSWC) formed a human chain on the press club premises demanding job guarantee on Saturday.
The council also threatened to go for a greater movement if steps are not taken soon to appoint the Forestry diploma holders as Foresters.

Token hunger strike for 'golden handshake' dues

Authorities 'cheated' with us, workers say, threaten self-immolation unless paid by Jan 25

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Former workers and employees of Darwani Textile Mills at a token hunger strike on the mill premises on Monday alleged that the BTMC authorities "cheated" with them by not paying their dues under a 'golden handshake' programme in time.
They threatened of "self-immolation" if their dues are not paid by January 25. Ninety-eight workers and employees of the mill accepted the 'golden handshake'.
At a brief rally there, speakers said they accepted the 'golden handshake' as BTMC Chairman Brig Gen (Rtd) Anwar Hossen Chowdhury during a visit to the mill in August last year assured them in presence of CBA leaders and journalists that 'inshaallah dues would be paid within one and a half months or two months'.
The 98 people accepted 'golden handshake' following the chair-

man's verbal assurance, the said.
But the mill authorities adopted a trick, the speakers alleged. The mill authorities managed a written agreement with the workers and employees that payments would be made when the government provides money, they said. The total dues is about Tk two crore 33 lakh.
Not getting the dues after two months, their leaders at a press conference at Nilphamari Press Club on December 13 last year urged the government and the mill authorities to pay their dues by December 31.
Then they staged demonstrations, but to no response, the speakers said.
The rally was addressed by, among others, CBA Acting President Abdul Rahman Prodhan, Jatio Sramik Party central organising secretary Bazlar Rahman, Nilphamari Jubo League General Secretary Shahed Mahmud, CPB

(Communist Party of Bangladesh) President Sreedam Das.
When contacted, the mill's General Manager Zulhas Mia said he is maintaining constant contact with the BTMC chairman, who is also very keen to make the payments at the earliest.
CBA Acting President Abdur Rahman Prodhan, who is also a leader of ruling BNP's labour front Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal said he accompanied by leaders of Sramik League (Awami League's labour front) and Jatio Sramik Party (labour front of Ershad's Jatiya Party) met the BTMC chairman in Dhaka on September 23 last year. The chairman told them that he had written to the Finance Secretary for funds and was awaiting a reply.
Former CBA president Mahatabuddin Sarkar alleged that the authorities were trying to create a frustrating situation in the mill to pave the way for its privatisation.



Ninety-eight workers of state-owned Darwani Textile Mills on a token hunger strike in front of the mill gate in Nilphamari on Monday.

Fresh agitation for BRTC service in 3 Sylhet UZs

January 13-17 rallies and siege to upazila headquarters announced, indefinite suspension of supplies to follow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet.

A fresh agitation programme has been announced at a rally at Jaintapur upazila headquarters for resumption of BRTC bus service three upazilas of Sylhet.
The programme includes rallies at Kanaighat upazila headquarters on January 13, at Jaintapur on January 14 and at Gowaighat on January 16. People will lay a siege to the three upazila headquarters on January 17. A 'tougher' programme will be announced at a rally at Jaintapur on January 18.
The 17 Parganas Shalish Samannaya Committee, a non-partisan people's forum, announced the programmes at the Jaintapur rally on Sunday.
Speakers at the rally alleged that the finance and the communica-

tion ministers pushed them towards agitation and they will be responsible for any consequence.
The speakers said, the finance minister is a bright son of the region. BRTC service was introduced on September 10 at his initiative. Its withdrawal on pressure from private transport owners is unacceptable, they said.
If the service is not resumed, supply of tea, sand, stone, and coal imported from India through Tamabil will be stopped indefinitely.
Supply of sand, stones and coal from the three upazilas to the rest of the country including other areas of Sylhet remained suspended for 24 hours on January 7 at the call of the Committee.
Former Jaintapur Upazila chairman Siraj Uddin Ahmed, who

is Convener of the Committee, chaired the rally.
It was addressed by, among others, Jaintapur Awami League President Md. Abdullah, BNP Secretary and former Union Parishad (UP) chairman Abdul Malik Manik, UP chairmen Mokhlisur Rahman Doula, Ekhlisar Rahman, Kamal Ahmed, Qudrat Ullah, ABM Zakaria, Golam Kibria Helal, Shahed Ahmed Babar, Advocate Rafique Ahmed, Moulana Abul Hossain Chatuli, Moulana Muhibul Haque, former UP Chairman Luthfur Rahman Lebu, Abul Kalam Azad, Mashuk Ahmed and Baharul Alam.
People of the three upazilas are also boycotting private bus and minibuses since October 13, alleging that they are behind withdrawal of BRTC service.

UNDP team passes hectic day in CHT

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A three-member high level United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) team left for Bandarban on conclusion of their visit to Khagrachhari on Sunday afternoon.
The delegates came to Khagrachhari in the morning following a three-day visit to Rangamati where they exchanged views with Regional Council Chairman Santu Larma. Zila Parishad Chairman Dr Manik Lal Dewan, Rangamati DC, SP and local NGO leaders.
The team led by Sarah L Timson, a retired UNDP high official, Elsa Stamattopoulou, acting Secretary of Permanent Forum on UN Aborigine Affairs, Victoria Lucia Taull, Chairpersons of the UN Voluntary Fund for Aborigine Affairs and local UNDP Coordinator Prasenjit Chakma arrived Dhaka on January 4 on a fact finding tour to Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

At Khagrachhari they met Khagrachhari Deputy Commissioner (DC), Mahbubur Rahman, Police Superintendent Motiur Rahman Sheikh, Maung Circle Chief (king) Pauha Pru and people from all strata of life.
Earlier, the delegates reached Khagrachhari via Mahalchhari where they were informed about the overall situation of CHT at Mahalchhari Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office. They also visited Basantapara and Babupara villages, ravaged in an untoward situation among hill people and Bangalees. They talked to the villagers and observed the rehabilitation activities. They also visited a cluster village to have a first hand knowledge about the prevailing atmosphere at Chongrachhori. Then the team went to the CHT Development Board (CHTDB) office where hundreds of Bangalees thronged carrying placards inscribing slogans in English like "We Want to Live in Peace with Equal Rights", "We

Want Development", "Santu Larma is a Butcher-Abductor, We Want His Expulsion". The delegates passed a hectic day there meeting CHTDB chairman Wadud Bhuiyan MP, District Council Chairman Nakkhatra Lal Dev Barman and Chairman of the Internal Refugee Rehabilitation Task Force Samiran Dewan.
They discussed the latest situation in CHT, besides inviting their suggestions to restart road construction work including development activities in health and agriculture sectors and pure water supply projects.
The team's visit is an attempt to resolve issues with Regional Council Chairman Santu Larma paving the way to restart stalled UNDP initiated development activities following abduction of three foreign engineers from Guniala in Naniarchar on Rangamati-Khagrachhari road in 2001.

Hajj pilgrimage of 500 uncertain in Sylhet

Biman and travel agents accuse each other

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet.

Hajj pilgrimage of about 500 people in Sylhet region this year has become uncertain amid allegations and counter allegations of irresponsibility by Biman authorities and travel agents.
Talking to The Daily Star on Monday, Sylhet unit president of Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh (ATAB) Syed Shafiqul Haque said it took a longer time this year to obtain documents on renting houses in Mecca for the pilgrims by some of our agents.
Biman authorities are not issuing tickets for the 500 pilgrims on the plea of this problem. If tickets are not issued, it will be difficult to collect visas for them from the Saudi embassy in Dhaka within the specified time, he said.
The embassy fixed January 14 as the last date for collecting visa, he said.
Same was the allegation of Alhaj Ataur Rahman, president of Sylhet unit of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB). He said Biman can easily manage additional flights for the pilgrims.

Some other travel agents also alleged that Biman authorities created the crisis in the name of ticket and seat shortage.
They also alleged that a similar situation was created last year also. Biman was later compelled to arrange additional flights following pressure from high-ups.
Intending pilgrim Faruque Ahmed said, "I along with many others deposited part payments to a travel agent weeks ago, but it could not make things ready yet, putting us in an uncertain situation. They are delaying in completing formalities. We do not know what will happen".
The whole problem centres procurement of documents on renting houses for pilgrims in Mecca. The Biman does not issue ticket without this document, and without ticket, the Saudi embassy does not issue visa.
When contacted, Biman's Sylhet District Manager Tajul Islam said that to avoid any unwanted situation, they had a meeting with travel agents in Sylhet weeks ago to ascertain the demand for tickets this year.

Accordingly, 2005 tickets were confirmed against a demand for 2000, which have already been given to travel agents.
But some of the agents failed to send their clients as per scheduled flights at the beginning, when seats remained vacant. This happened as they failed to bring the documents on renting houses in Saudi Arabia.
Meanwhile, officials of HAAB and ATAB at a hurriedly called press conference at Sylhet Press Club on Monday demanded immediate arrangement for issuance of tickets for the 500 intending pilgrims.
They blamed Biman for not arranging the tickets.
In the written statement Alhaj Ataur Rahman said that some of the travel agents could not collect documents on renting houses due to some new formalities imposed by the Saudi government.
He claimed that travel agents at the meeting with Biman officials demand 3900 tickets for Sylhet region.
But, Biman issued only 2000 tickets, Rahman alleged.

5 JCD leaders hurt in attack by ICS-backed outsiders

A RU CORRESPONDENT

At least five Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders were wounded in an attack by Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS)-supported outsiders for protesting illegal sell of admission forms on Sunday.
The injured were Joint Organising Secretary of the university unit of JCD Masudur Rahman Rana, Sher-e-Bangla Hall Vice President Mizanur Rahman, Suhrawardi Hall Joint Secretary Limon, Sher-e-Bangla Hall unit Finance Secretary Akram Hossain and Sher-e-Bangla Hall Joint Finance Secretary Babu.
ICS-backed outsiders sold admission forms in exchange for extra money in front of the university branch of Agrani Bank for several days.
Being informed JCD leaders rushed to the scene at around 1.30pm on the day and caught them.
A JCD team met Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Faisul Islam Faruki and demanded restriction on entry of outsiders. VC assured them of immediate action.
The university unit general secretary of JCD Aslam Reza told this correspondent that the university administration had failed to check unauthorised sale of admission forms by ICS-backed outsiders.

40 injured in Satkhira road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

At least 40 persons were injured seriously in a road accident when a bus rammed a private car on Satkhira-Jessore road at Kazirhat Bazaar in Kalaroa upazila on Monday evening.
Of the injured Ziaul Isabdi and Ebad Ali were shifted to Satkhira hospital as their condition deteriorated, police sources said.
The other injured who were

admitted at Kalarao Health complex are: Arizul, 50, Rabiul, 16, Ibrahim, 20, Abul Hossain, 31, Aleya, 45, Montaz, 15, Monowara, Anowara, 10, Niyamuddin, 31, Mosharaf, 35, Miaraj, 60, Palash, 40, Laltu, 30, Monira, 30, Amena, 20, Magful, 45, and Jahar Ali, 35.
The rest were given first aid treatment.
A case was filed with Kalaroa thana.

Pourasabha acting chairman sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Acting Chairman and four ward commissioners of Monirampur Pourasava in Jessore district, accused in a corruption case, were sent to jail on Sunday as a court rejected their bail prayers.
They are Acting Chairman Md Abdus Sattar and ward commissioners Asaduzzaman, Sakhawat Hossain, Makbul Hossain and

Ibrahim Hossain.
Amjad Hossain filed a petition with Jessore District Anti-corruption Bureau charging them with "misappropriation" of Pourasabha money.
The court issued warrants for their arrest after an investigation report was submitted on Saturday.
The case was filed with Monirampur thana in November last year, court sources said.

Mystery shrouds death of wealthy lady in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The death of a wealthy lady at Chatmohar Notun Bazar is shrouded in mystery.
Durga Rani Kundu, 45, was found dead at her home on Sunday morning.
Neighbours and police sources told this correspondent that she came back home from a nearby temple at about 7 pm on Saturday.
The next morning neighbours saw the main gate of her house open. On entry they found her body lying on the veranda.
Police suspected that she might have been strangled by miscreants

with an ill-motive to grab her vast property.
The lady was living with her only son Mirtu Ranjan Kundu, 20, while her husband Krista Chandra Kundu was living in India for the last six years. Her son was staying at his uncle's house in Bogra on the fateful night.
The lady was famous in the area for her wisdom and social work. She helped the needy always.
People in the area have demanded proper inquiry into the incident and punishment to 'killers'. She was incinerated at Chatmohar on Sunday.
A case filled with Chatmohar police. None was arrested.

Five killed in Netrakona bus mishap

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Five persons were killed on the spot and 20 injured when a Netrakona-bound bus from Mohongonj fell into a roadside ditch at Kodomtoly in Barhatta upazila yesterday at about 11:30 am.
Police identified four of the dead as Shariful Islam, 25, of Ujangong village in Bashatta upazila; Abdul Mannan, 45, of Alokdia village in Barhatta upazila; Kajol, 35, of Doutalpur village in Mohongonj upazila; Jilan Khan of Kokian village in Darmapasa upazila in Sunamgonj district. The other could not be identified.
Five of the injured were rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

Manikganj AL protests attack on football star Munna

A CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Awami League (AL) and its front organisations brought out a procession and held a rally in Manikganj town yesterday protesting the attack on central AL Youth and Sports Affairs Secretary and Abahani football team official Dewan Shafiul Arefin Tutul and football star Monem Munna allegedly by ruling party men at Mirpur stadium in Dhaka on Monday.
The rally was held in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office.
Manikganj district AL President Golam Mohiuddin, secretary Gazi Kamrul Huda Selim and party leaders advocate Dipak Ghosh, Laxmi Chatterji, Akter Uddin Raja, Habibur Rahman Sentu, Tanjid Ullah Prodhan Liltu, Abdur Rajjak Raja, Mahbubul Hoq Khaled and Haji Swapnon addressed the rally.
They demanded arrest and punishment of the attackers and an end to alleged politicisation of the sports sector.

Section 144

Manikchhari BCL confce not held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

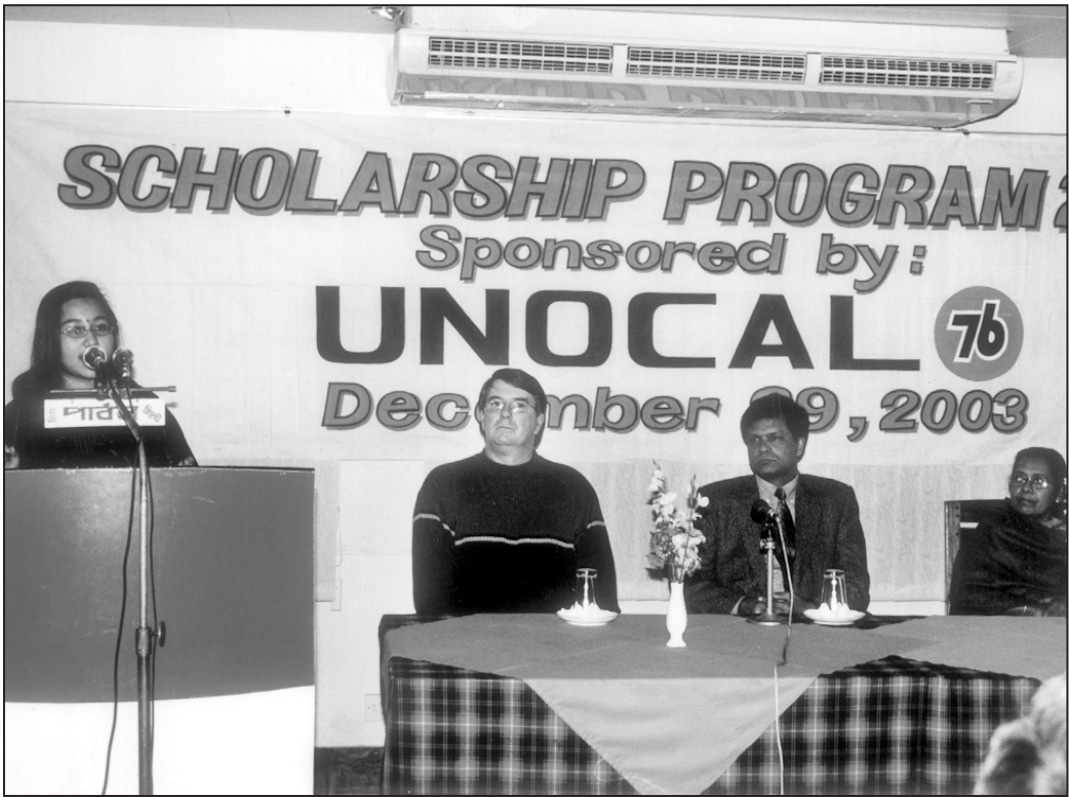
The Manikchhari Upazila Chhatra League (BCL) conference could not be held due to promulgation of Section 144 CRPC at the venue on Monday.
Local administration in an order banned meetings to avert untoward incidence as BCL and Chhatra Dal convened meetings at a time and at the same venue.
BCL organised their first ever conference since takeover of administration by the ruling Alliance.
Upazila BCL President Shafiqur Rahman Faruque told journalists that they took permission from the authorities concerned to hold meeting at Manikchhari Rest House ground 10 days ago. Suddenly Chhatra Dal and Jubo Dal convened their extended meetings at the same venue on January 10, Faruque added.
However, defying the ban order, Chhatra Dal and Jubo Dal held a meeting there.
Meanwhile, invited Awami League central leader Asim Kumar Ukil and BCL President Liakat Sikder met the administration officials before their departure for Dhaka.

American Corner

at Sylhet Int'l University

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An American corner will be opened at Sylhet International University campus tomorrow.
American Centre of US Embassy has established the corner.
Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman will be chief guest and US Ambassador Harry K Thomas will attend the function as special guest.
The US ambassador announced his intention to set up the corner at a function on the American Week held in Sylhet in September last year.
The corner will consist of a small library with modern facilities. Membership will be given to boys and girls aged 16 years. Books, periodicals, journals, VDO and Internet facilities will be available.
Information on education, history, culture, business and American life can be gathered from here. Students, businessmen and government officials can be members in exchange of nominal fee.



Nipa Choudhury, a meritorious student speaking on behalf of Unocal Scholarship recipients. Vic Lane, Jalalabad Gas Plant Superintendent, Unocal Bangladesh; Shabbir Hossain, Sylhet Field Manager, Unocal Bangladesh and Krishna Dutta, Headmistress of Sylhet Government Pilot High School are also seen.

Unocal scholarships distributed

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Unocal Bangladesh awarded scholarships to 20 meritorious students appeared from Sylhet education board at a function held in a Sylhet hotel recently, according to a press release.
On behalf of Unocal, Shabbir Hossain, Sylhet Field Manager and Vic Lane, Jalalabad Gas Plant Superintendent handed over the scholarships to the students for their outstanding results in the Secondary and Higher Secondary examinations.
Ten of these students obtained GPA-5 in the SSC examination and 10 obtained the highest GPA in the HSC examination.
Among others, Vic Lane from Unocal, Krishna Dutta, Headmistress, Sylhet Government Pilot High School, Abdus Shakur, Vice Principal, Shahjalal Jameya Islamia School and College and Shabbir Hossain spoke.
Unocal has been distributing scholarships to meritorious students at SSC and HSC levels for the last two years.