

SNAPS

Govt to build house for Taramon Bibi

BSS, Rajibpur (Kurigram)
The government plans to construct a house for freedom fighter Taramon Bibi Bir Pratik at Kurigram.
On January 18, the government ordered the deputy commissioner of Kurigram to build a new house for the lone female Bir Pratik on five decimals of land.
In another move recently, the government instructed the superintendent engineer of the Public Works Department (PWD) to appoint Taramon's son-in-law Rafiqul Islam as an office assistant cum typist at its Sherpur office on a temporary basis.
Earlier, the government provided her with 45 decimals of farmland, Tk 25,000 and 12 bundles of tin sheets for her living.
Expressing her happiness, the valiant freedom fighter said, "I do not know where the government will construct the new residence for me. But I would be the happiest person if it were built in Kurigram town, which would help me get medical facilities."
She also thanked the government for appointing Rafiq at the PWD.

Netrakona BNP leader murder: Six arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona
Mohonganj police arrested six persons on Saturday evening on charge of killing a BNP activist named Kaish Chowdhury of village Halnaia under Mohonganj upazila.
The arrested are Suair union BNP president, also a freedom fighter Nur Ahmed Nurach, Chand Mia, Jahangir Hossein, Shafiulla, Nurul Amin and Anwar Hossein, all of Halnaia village.
Chowdhury was killed in an armed attack in his house in broad day light by a group of miscreants on Friday.

Prisoner dies at Bhola

A CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

A prisoner died while being taken to Bhola Sadar Hospital from Bhola District Jail on Saturday.
Police said Abdur Razzaque, 30, son of one Abul Hossain of North Degoli union in the Sadar upazila fell sick Saturday morning.
He died while being taken to hospital. He was accused in five cases.
The body was handed over to the victim's family after autopsy at the hospital, police said.

Chicken Tk 40 per kg in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Retail prices of poultry birds have come down to one-third in different bazaars of the district including Nutun Bazaar in the town due to panic of bird flu.
At present poultry birds are being sold between Tk 40 to 45 per kilogram (kg) which were being sold at Tk 55 previously.
Owners of 400 poultry farms in the district are the worst sufferers.
Provash Chandra Saha, owner of Rafi Poultry told The Daily Star that they are selling a one-kg poultry bird at Tk 35 which they bought at Tk 50 a few days ago.
Local traders have hung the advertisement of Bangladesh Poultry Industries Association published on national dailies which say poultry birds of our country are safe from bird flu.

Manikganj BNP leader alleges death threat by party rivals

A CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

BNP leader Tozammel Hoq Toza of Manikganj, now under treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, has alleged that he is getting death threats from his rivals in the party.
Toza, a candidate for the post of secretary of Manikganj district BNP, was injured in attacks by his rivals at Makinganj earlier. He is former president of the district JCD.
In a seven-page written statement sent to Manikganj Press Club yesterday, Toza said the attackers are moving freely and threatening him with death.
Education Minister Dr M Osman Foruque who is minister-in-charge for Manikganj district has asked police to nab the attackers.
Toza said the BNP chief Khaleda Zia took a correct decision by replacing Chief Whip Knondakor Delwar Hossain with Dr Osman as the minister-in-charge for the district. Delwar had let loose a terror in the district, he alleged.

Teesta water withdrawal by India playing havoc

Flow now 800 to 1,200 cusec against around 6,500 cusec in 1997: Untimely erosion alarming due to water withdrawal, protection embankment threatened, says WDB chief engineer



The Teesta bed is now a tobacco field at



PHOTO: STAR

Gangachara (left) and rubbles of the collapsed groyne at Uttar Kolkand. The photos were taken on Friday.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gangachara

Unilateral withdrawal of water from Teesta river by India has caused havoc in its basin in greater Rangpur, effecting the ecology and economy.
At Dalia in the Teesta Barrage Project area, the dry season water flow now varies from 800 to 1200 cusec against 6,500 cusec in January 1997. The lowest flow was recorded at 706 cusec in January 2001, according to Water Development Board (WDB) sources.
During dry season every year, Indian authorities keep closed all the gates of Gozaldoba Barrage built in Teesta upstream in Kochbihar and withdraw water. They also divert the water to Mohanonda river for irriga-

tion.
This has turned the mighty river into a virtual streamlet causing emergence of numerous shoals.
The water flowing area of the river has been reduced abnormally at most places, triggering strong current and massive erosion.
As a result, 500 metres of the Teesta Protection Embankment at Dhamur have eroded into the river, rendering 70 families homeless in about a fortnight, the WDB sources said.
During a recent visit to different areas in Gangachara along the river, this correspondent saw tobacco being cultivated on numerous shoals which remain under 30 water during the wet season.
The water flowing area of Teesta

has been reduced to only 40 metres at Dhamur in Kolkand union in Gangachara upazila.
Erosion has turned alarming there. Besides crop lands, the WDB groyne built on the west bank of the river to stop erosion has collapsed into the river.
Strong water current has also hit the right bank of the Teesta and damaged 700 metres of the protection embankment at Dhamur.
The water flowing area of the river will be narrowed further till July when Indian authorities will open the barrage gates to release flood waters.
Nazrul at Kolkand village said he is now a rickshawpuller as the river has taken away all the 11 bighas of land of his family.
BSS adds from Rangpur: WDB

officials here told BSS that the matter was been informed to the higher authorities timely. Superintending Engineer (Design) of WDB has visited the spot. Chief Engineer Sayeed Ahmed, Executive Engineer Moazzem Hossain of Rangpur visited the spot several times recently to assess the latest situation.
A Tk two crore project is now under process of approval for reconstruction work to save the protection embankment at Dhamur, they said.
Executive Engineer Moazzem Hossain told BSS that the ongoing erosion there is alarming and the embankment as a whole is now under real threat. "We are expecting to start work soon after getting the funds," he said.

Jhalakathi police patrol boat tragedy Untrained cop plied vessel, pressure on to suppress probe report

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A departmental inquiry revealed that the police patrol boat which sank in Jhalakathi on January 21 was driven by a policeman who had no navigation licence and experience.
This was gathered from police sources yesterday though officials concerned declined to disclose contents of the probe report.
A three-member probe body led by ASP Abu Sufian of Jhalakati Sadar has submitted its report on the incident after a two-week investigation.
The patrol boat with 10 policemen of Jhalakati Sadar thana sank at the confluence of Dhansiri, Suganha and Bishkhali rivers when it hit a passenger launch, MV Belayet. Six firearms and 400 bullets were also missing. They were going to Ponaabalia for an operation.
Eight cows swam shore but ASI Nizamuddin and ASI Mahtab Hossain drowned and their bodies were recovered after three and six days respectively. The patrol boat, arms and ammunition are yet to be recovered.
The report said Constable Abdur Rahim (C.No-367) who was plying the patrol boat had no navigation license and training.
The patrol boat driver, Kabir, was removed from duty and Rahim was posted there allegedly through irregularity.

The sources claimed that high police officials who did the irregularity are now creating pressure on the probe body to "suppress or change" the report.
This has created a dilemma among high police officials and the report has not yet been officially accepted by the authorities concerned, they said.
The Jhalakathi DI-1 and the OC DB, two other members of the inquiry team, when contacted however denied that there was any pressure to change the report. They declined to disclose the report but admitted that it has been submitted.
The SP and the ASP of Jhalakati could not be contacted.

Outlaws' feud in Barisal intensifies 2 abducted, leg of one cut off by rivals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Outlaws belonging to Zia group abducted and cut off a leg of Parvez Chowkider, a member of the opponent Kamrul group on Thursday night.
Parvez Chowkider is a nephew of Kamrul group leader Ainal Chowkider, murdered earlier.
Police said he was abducted from his house at Sakokati village in Gournadi and taken to a primary

school at nearby Ghanteswar village under Uzirpur thana. They tortured him before cutting his leg.
Local people rescued Parvez in a critical condition after midnight when miscreants left the place and took him to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (BSBMCH).
Uzirpur police said Parvez is an active member of outlawed Sharbahara Party. He is being treated at BSBMCH under police

custody. No case was filed.
On Monday last, Humaun Kabir, another outlaw and nephew of Ainal Chokider, was seriously injured by members belonging to opponent Zia group. He is also under treatment at BSBMCH in police custody.
The feud between rival Sharbahara groups in Barisal, led by Zia and Kamrul, increased recently as police attempt for a rapprochement among them failed.

Catching of jatka on in Meghna, Tetulia

Current and mosquito nets used: Hundreds of maunds sent to Dhaka and other dists daily

A CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

Although banned, indiscriminate catching of *jatka* (Hilsha fish fry) and their sale in markets are going on unabated on the nose of law enforcers.
During a recent visit to different wholesale fish markets in Bhola, fish traders were seen busy packing *jatka* to send those to other parts of the country including Dhaka. The fries are also on open sale in different local markets.
The traders said they are having good catches of *jatka* in the Meghna and Tetulia rivers and in the Bay for the last one month.

They said hundreds of maunds of *jatka* are being traded daily in wholesale markets at Gazipur and Talatali in Bhola Sadar; Chowkigata and Kazirhat in Dauht Khan; Shoshiganj and Char Zahiruddin in Tajumuddin; Mongol Sikder and Lord Hardinge in Lalmohon; and Betna, Char Kossopia and Dhal Char in Char Fasson.
Large quantities of *jatka* are also sold even in small rural markets in the district.
Khorshed Alam, a fish trader at Gazipur said at least 100 maunds of *jatka* are being sent to Dhaka every day from this market.



PHOTO: STAR

Jatka on sale at a retail market at Bhola town. The photo was taken on Friday.

A different day for students

Group discussion with brilliant students, seminar on academic excellence, debate in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

It was a good day for students at Nilphamari. Boys and girls from different institutions exchanged views on education and examination with brilliant students from Dhaka.
The Dhaka-based Nilphamari Students Welfare Society arranged a reunion and a seminar titled 'Promoting Academic Excellence' on Thursday, marking the Eid.
In group discussions with students who did brilliant results in SSC and HSC examinations, they learnt how to do good in examination.
A debate competition, fashion show and a cultural programme added colour to reunion programme.
Elders including teachers and officials also discussed various problems in imparting good educa-

tion to students.
Renowned scientist Dr Zahid Hossen Prodhan was the chief guest at the seminar where the speakers identified the problems.
All agreed that there is no alternative to proper teaching at schools and colleges and that private coaching helps a little in doing good in examination.
They said a good guardian and a good teacher can produce a good student and a good citizen.
Institutions should appoint good and dedicated teachers and donations for admission of students should be stopped.
Some speakers said advice from foreign specialists can not help improve the education system. We know better how to improve out system, they said.
Corruption by a section of education officials, teachers and managing committees is a major hindrance to development of institutions and the standard of education.
They suggested that teachers should be paid well so that they can dedicate to their profession.
Participants in the seminar included Dewan Kamal Ahamed, Nilphamari Chamber President Sohail Parvez, District Education Officer Hasna Banu, Moshir Rahman College Principal Hafizur Rahman, Associate Professor of Nilphamari Government College Gola Mostofa, headmistress of Nilphamari Government Girls High School Jahanara Begum and headmaster Rabeya Balika Bidya Nikaton Mujibur Rahman.

Meet to raise HIV/AIDS awareness in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'Baria

An information sharing and awareness raising meeting under HIV/AIDS prevention programme was held at Brahmanbaria Press Club on Wednesday.
Marie Stopes Bangladesh in collaboration with Brahmanbaria Press Club organised the meeting.
Press club President Monsur Kamal presided over the meeting.
Marie Stopes Bangladesh Project Manager GNI Faysol presented the key-note paper while Project Coordinator AKM Fazley Khuda and Project Manager Sujon Barua addressed the meeting.
Twenty-one journalists of local and national dailies attended the meeting.
Brahmanbaria district is vulnerable to AIDS as it is a bordering district and surrounded by high prevalence neighbouring countries India and Myanmar, badly affected by HIV and AIDS.
The mode of HIV transmission and the way to prevent the deadly disease were also discussed in the meeting.

Ispahani school reunion held

CU CORRESPONDENT

The first reunion of ex-students of Ispahani Public School and College (IPSC), Chittagong was held at the Chittagong Club auditorium here on Saturday.
Ispahani Alumni Association (IAA) organised the daylong reunion function.
Minister for Education Dr Osman Faruk was present as chief guest. Former Education Minister and incumbent Vice Chancellor of the University of Science and Technology Professor Dr Abdul Mazid Khan, noted scientist Professor Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam and Vice Chairman of IPSC Board of Management Mirza Salman Ispahani were present at the function as special guests.
Among others, IPSC Principal Hasina Zakaira, Ispahani Alumni Association President Syed Samiul Haque and Ashkur Rahman, a first batch student were present on the dais.
Participants observed one minute silence to show respect to late Sabekunnahar Sony, a former brilliant student of the school who met a tragic end of her life in a cross fire of feuding student groups on the BUET campus.
Education minister promised that he would try to declare the institution as an ideal and best institution.
A cultural function and a raffle draw were also held.



PHOTO: STAR

A partial view of the meeting to share information and create awareness about AIDS, held at Brahmanbaria Press Club on Saturday.

Rangpur Sugar Mills workers agitate against layoff decision

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Workers and employees of Rangpur Sugar Mills, joined by sugarcane farmers, brought out a procession in the town and held a protest rally on the premises of the Deputy Commissioner's office on Saturday demanding withdrawal a decision to lay off the mill.

They also handed over a memorandum to the DC. Presided over by Abdul Matin, the rally was addressed by, among others, Tabibar Rahman, Mohammed Ali, Badruzzaman Dulu, Mohammed Hossain Faku, Abdul Latif Proddhan, Amirul Islam and Advocate Mohon.

The procession and rally was part of a fortnight long agitation programme.

The speakers urged the authorities to withdraw the lay off decision and threatened of tougher programmes including road-rail blockade for non-compliance.
They said the sugar mill is the only heavy industry in the district and its lay off will affect several lakh people including farmers.
The government has decided to lay off the mill on March 31.

Hunger strike in front of UNO office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Members of the Gobindaganj Upazila Citizens' Committee staged a day-long hunger strike on the premises of the UNO office on Saturday demanding release of its convener Abdul Matin Mollah.

They demanded withdrawal of the "false" case against Matin Mollah and arrest of alleged terrorist and money lender Arifur Rahman Liton for filing the case.

A brief rally was also held there. It was addressed by, among others, Aminul Islam Golap, convener of Gaibandha Citizens' Committee, Nazrul Islam, Sheikh Sadek Ali, Mojibar Rahman, Mirinal Kanti Barman and Lutfar Rahman.

Three 'outlaws' arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Three outlaws were arrested at Kumarkhali on Sunday. People caught three cadres of the outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBKP) from Kumarkhali college para slum and handed over them to police.
A Pakistani rifle, a sub-machine gun and a country made rifle with 39 rounds of bullets were also recovered from their possession.
The arrested are Dudu, 25, son of Afsar Sheih, Mufa 30, son of Tazuddin of Jagannathpur in Kushtia Sadar upazila and Razu, 26, son of Sona Fakir of Nandalapur village in Kumarkhali upazila.
Police sources said a Drug Prevention Committee (DPC) team constituted by the people of all walks of life in Kumarkhali town went to college para slum area on Saturday. They found three unknown persons roaming in the area. The team challenged the strangers. But they tried to escape.
The team screamed for help. People from nearby came to the police's rescue.
Police quoting their confessional statements said they were going to Khoksa upazila to meet their leaser Akdil Hossain.

Ex-leader of JCD arrested on murder charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

An ex-leader of Jatiyatabadi Chattra Dal (JCD) was arrested on Saturday afternoon on charge of killing a BNP leader and his son at Shorshuna village in Shalikhla upazila.

The arrested is former Shalikhla thana JCD General Secretary Md Kizar Hossain who is also the son of Mojaffer Hossain, General Secretary of BNP of the same unit, according to police.
Local BNP leader Ansar Ali and his son Shakiur Rahman were killed by rivals on the night of January 7 in a rivalry between Shalikhla union BNP President Atiar Rahman Biswas and its former President Abu Sayeed Sikder of Shorshuna village.
Ansar Ali's son Sayeedur Rahman filed a murder case with Shalikhla police station accusing 23 people.