NATIONAL

The Daily Star

mercial operation is yet to be fixed.

travel in the 11-coach train, now

ready at Lalmonirhat for the trial run.

Six of the coaches have been reno-

vated at Syedpur railway workshop

"We expect to cover the distance

Through this service, passen-

and the rest arranged from other

the distance (Lalmonirhat to Dhaka)

via Santaher and Iswardy in 10 to 11

aers will aet rid of the time-

consuming and troublesome ferry

service between Teesta Muk Ghat

and Bahadurabad Ghat, which

normally takes three hours, the

Gaibandha railway station master

said. More time is needed during

The survivors said soon after the

The tragic accident brought

Our Comilla Correspondent

reports: A mother and her son were

killed when hit by a pickup van while

they were crossing the Dhaka-

barricaded the highway for three

hours till police came and restored

railway zones.

hours" the DRM said.

About 500 passengers will to

Plunder of reserve forest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Rashulpur range under

Mymensingh district and

timber are supplied from the saw-

At night, about 50 rickshaw vans

engaged by smugglers, carry ille-

gally felled trees to the sawmills and

take back the timber to desired

are illegal, sources claimed.

Tangail districts.

Off-season foggy weather disrupted waterway communication on Friday and Saturday nights in Barisal region.

SNAPS

Off-season fog

disrupts

journey

waterway

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

On Friday night, dense fog from about 11 covered the rivers. The fog lasted till about 8 next morning. The long-route water transports

had to anchor in mid-rivers and wait forest area. for hours. Same was the situation These saw mills are in on Saturday night, vessel operators Santushpur, Barachara and Chandimaondop forest beats in

Signature campaign

for trial of

killers OUR CORERSONDENT,

Manikganj The Manikganj unit of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad has launched a signature campaign demanding arrest of the killers of a young girl.

Hundreds of people have already put their signatures for trial of the killers of Bilkis Akhter Lucky, 20, Parishad leaders told The Daily Star yesterday.

Lucky, daughter of Billal Hossain of Pouli village in Manikganj, was married to Rafiqul Islam of Bashudevpur village in Manikgani Sadar thana about two years back.

Police recovered Lucky's body from a field in Enayetpur upazila in Pabna on January 23. Her mother filed a case accusing Rafiqul.

Shahid Minar demolished **OUR CORRESPONDENT,**

Unidentified miscreants demolished a temporary Shahid Minar at Nazirpur School at Muladi

under Barisal district on the night of February 20. Sources there said the local people built the temporary Shahid Minar on the school premises as

there is no permanent one. The incident created tension in the area but people observed their Ekushey programs in a befitting

In another incident in connection with Ekushey observance, some JCD (Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal) activists ransacked the Shandhani office at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital on Saturday night as it placed wreath at the Shahid Minar

on the campus first of all. Shandhani finance secretary Shohel Rana was injured in the attack. Shandhani is a voluntary organisation

Artificial crisis of kerosene in 3 dists

STAR NATIONAL DESK

35 unauthorised sawmills process 3500 cft illegal timber daily in Mymensingh, Tangail forest areas: Officials blame each other

destinations, they said. Rickshaw van driver Abul Lalam

talking to this correspondent during Unbelievable though, there are 35 a recent visit said the smugglers are unauthorised sawmills in preserve forest areas in Mymensingh and very organised and they come to the forests in groups. "They are very Law prohibits setting up of sawpowerful and maintain links with mill within ten kilometres of reserve persons concerned"

Fulbaria upazila headquarter, Kishoregonj, Shibgonj and Babular Bazar under Fulbaria upazila are trading centres for smuggled timber. If illegal extraction of timber goes on like this, the reserve forest will deplete, the sources said.

Motishmara beat in Modhupur forest range in Tangail district. Everyday, about 5000 cft (KB) of Besides, the government is also being deprived of huge amounts of revenue due to this illegal extracmills, of which about 3500 (cft KB) tion.

The sources said Santushpur beat is the most attractive area for timber smugglers now as trees there are big and mature. Santushpur, Rangamatia,

Krishnapur, Anayatpur, Dulma, Khalgao, Gupinathpur and Betbaria areaa are under the Santushpur beat.

When contacted, Santushpur Beat Officer Narayan Candra Das said the forest department has forbidden establishment of any sawmill in 10 km area. He said he does not know how these sawmills were set up because the DC is the only authority to give permission. Santushpur preserve forest area is spread over 6522.72 acres.

He said he mentioned about the unauthorisd sawmills in his monthly report to the authorities but they did not take any step regarding this.

Forest quard Rahamat Ali said there are only two forest guards in Santoshpur beat. It is impossible for them to look after the 6522.72-acre forest area. So smugglers can easily take away trees.

Md Abraham, Ranger of Rashulpur forest range, said he has nothing to do if the higher authorities do not take any action.

It is not possible to stop illegal felling of trees with the present small manpower, he said Mymensingh Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Abdul Latif Mia said, "

sent a report to the forest ministry about the unauthorised sawmills but the ministry did not take any action". Fulbaria UNO said. "The DC is the sole authority to gave permis-

sion for sawmill. So I have nothing to Sources at Mymensingh DC's office said permission was not given for any saw mill in the reserve forest area in the district.

The Mymensingh DC could not be contacted over phone despite several attempts.

India postpones barbed wire fencing along Habiganj border A CORRESPONDENT, Habiganj

India has postponed construction of barbed wire fencing along Sharifpur border till demarcation of the borde line in a week

The decision was taken at a flag meeting between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at Sharifpur on Saturday.

Srimangol-2 Rifles Battalion Commander Lt Col M Imamul Huda and 34 BSF Commandant Bipra Das led their teams in the meeting. India constructed border pillars

about 150 yards inside the Bangladesh territory at Sharifpur frontier.

Fake NGO men held for swindling

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Villagers at Chapani Hat in Dimla upazila caught two employees of a fake NGO for allegedly swindling Tk two lakh and handed them to police.

They two -- Maruf Ahamed and Abdul Latif of Grameen Progoti Sangstha-- came to the village one month back and started taking deposits' from poor people, promising them bigger loans and other facility

On Thursday, the depositors became suspicious as they attempted to flee in a microbus.

They detained the two and called olice, who arrested them. One of the two hails from Bogra

and another from Tangail, police said.

PHOTO: STAR AL leader killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Police said Sujan of Kaliara Gabragathi village was killed when he was returning home from Muktirbazar.

A case was filed with Netrakona police station in this connection. one was arrested.

Second inter-city train between N-districts, Dhaka soon

All preparations ready, trial run any day

OUR CORRESPONDENT, spondent over phone that that the exact time schedule for the com-

Bangladesh Railway is going to introduce soon the second inter-city train service from northern districts to Dhaka via Jamuna Bridge, coverng seven districts.

Gaibandha

The Lalmonirhat-Dhaka service will cover Kurigram, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Bogra, Natore and Naogaon districts.

All preparations are ready for its formal inauguration and all the coaches are at Lalmonirhat now.

March 7 may be a tentative date as the Prime Minister may be in the northern districts then. But her visit is vet to be finalised. Railway sources told this correspondent yesterday. A trial run is likely anytime before the formal inauguration. The Divisional Railway Manager

winter when the river flow (DRM), Lalmonirhat, told this corre-

Eight of a bridal party killed in road mishap

2 others killed in Comilla

The name of another victim could not be known.

Nilphamari Joy of a bridal party turned into a accident, some people instead of heart-rending scene at Syedpur as rescuing them snatched gold ornaeight of them died when a truck ments and other valuables. rammed one of their vehicles. people from nearby areas. They

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

A pall of gloom descended the town when the bodies were brought on Thursday.

About 100 people in eight vehicles were going to Katnarpara in Bogra for marriage of one SM Shah Jahan of Syedpur town.

At Dhaper Hat in Gaibandha on the Rangpur-Bogra highway, a truck coming from the opposite direction hit a microbus in the convoy, killing three on the spot.

Four others died while being taken to hospital and another at Rangpur Medical College Hospital. Seven of the victims are Asif, 40,

Aftab, 30, Rana, 8, Tamijuddin, Mintu, 45, Raju, 14, Shahida, 60

Chittagong highway at near Kalakachua, five moles of the town on Saturday. The victims are Dipali Begum 20, wife of Nur Alam and her son Shafi Hossain. 5 of Kalakatchua village under Burichong upazila. Police arrested the driver and seized the vehicle (Dhaka-BA-368).

traffic

সোনালী পাইলট প্রজেক্টের বিশেষ ব

Victims include AL leader Monjurul Imam, advocate Bijon Behari Mondol, journalist Manik Saha OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira He has also disclosed names of his political godfathers, who include Notorious outlaw Abdul Gaffar alias some BNP leaders and Jugikhali UP Tushar, now in custody, has conchairman Rafiqul Islam. But police

fessed to his involvement in 17 murders including those of Awami **BNP** leaders League leader Monjurul Imam, advocate Bijon Behari Mondol, iournalist Manik Shah and Sirajul

to 17 murders

Gaffar was arrested by a team of Joint Forces from a rented house of BNP leader and Jugikhali Union Parishad Chairman Rabiul Alam at Kalaroa upazila headquarter

and recover arms.

One of the unauthorised sawmills in Rasulpur forest range area in Tangail, left, a heap of smuggled timbers in the area, right. The photo were taken last week

declined to disclose names of the Police said Gaffar is yet to give

any information about his arms.

Wednesday night.

Joint forces also raided the

house of BNP leader and UP chairman Rabiul Islam but failed to arrest him. Police said Rabiul Islam is also wanted in several cases filed with Kalaroa thana

Gaffar was taken to Sonandanga thana on Saturday to probe Sirajul Islam murder case. He has been shown arrested in the case.

Gaffar was released from iail in April last year. Meanwhile Sonadanga police arrested four

Assoc polls held

Friday. Advocate Din Mohammad Sikder has been emerged as president of the association defeating Advocate Sarder Ahmed Nawsher

Advocate Md Abu Tarek Molla were elected vice presidents while Advocate Iftekhab Alam and Advocate Zender Ali became assistant secretaries.

Advocate Rawsan Ali Mia. Advocate Aminur Rahman Biswas and Advocate Enamul Huq were elected members of the association. As both the secretary aspirants Advocate Kazi Abul Khayer and Advocate Abul Basher secured 52

Gopalganj Bar

Outlaw Tushar confesses OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gopalgan Election to Gopalganj Bar Association was held here on

Ali by six votes. Advocate Fayekuzzaman and

Sujan, 28, an Awami League activist of Netrakona Sadar upazila unit of the party, was killed by miscreants at Muktirbazar on Saturday.

An artificial crisis of kerosene prevails in Bogra, Barisal and Gaibandha for several weeks.

Our Bogra Correspondent has reported one crore litre of kerosene were mixed with diesel used for irrigation purpose in the northern region during last two months.

An officer of the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) told this correspondent the administration will take action against the dealers who drew much kerosene and were involved in adulteration of diesel in the ongoing Boro season.

Control Room sources here said most of the dealers in this region mix kerosene with diesel for an extra benefit of Tk 3 per litre.

Our Barisal correspondent reported that the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) depots in Barisal region are supplying less than one-fourth of the demand.

Each litre of kerosene is being sold between Tk 22 to 24.

According to market sources, the depots of Meghna, Padma and Jamuna oil companies under BPC have a capacity to contain more than 17 lakh litre of kerosene in the region

Stock in Meghna depots has been exhausted while the other two depots contain only eight lakh litre. They are now supplying only about 50,000 litre against the official demand of 1.5 lakh litre of kerosene per day under rationing and quota system.

Kerosene is being old in Kalapar, Galachipa, Monpura, Baufal, Matbaria, Hizla, Kathalia and other places at Tk 28 to 30 per litre.

Morshed Alam and Shahidul Islam, Depot-in-Charge and Marketing Officer of Padma Oil denied any charge of corruption and irregularities in distribution of kerosene

The district administration in Barisal held a meeting at the Deputy Commissionr's (DC) office recently to review the crisis of kerosene.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent has reported Sunderganj upazila unit of Samajtantrik Khet Majur and Krishak Front brought out a procession at Sunderganj on Tuesday.

Processionists have demanded reduction in price of diesel, fertiliser kerosene and other agriculture inputs. After the procession a meeting was held at the Upazila Parishad compound.

mander' outlawed Purba Bangla Communist Party's (PBCP ML Janajuddha), was interrogated at Satkhira by a team comprising Khulna DIG (Deputy Inspector General of Police) Abdul Aziz Sarkar, Police Superintendent Rafiqul Islam and Capt. Sakib,

Islam, godfather of outlaw Mrinal.

Party).

Mrinal led a rival outlawed party.

Tushar, Satkhira district 'com-

NBCP (Nutan Bangla Communist

police sources said. Police here so far got information about 10 murder cases against him. They have asked police stations in the region to send records of other cases against him.

He told the interrogators that he developed a network with at least 200 armed cadres of Janaiuddha in Satkhira under the protection of his political godfathers including a UP chairman in Kalaroa.

Police said he looked quite normal during interrogation. He is not repented for his misdeeds. Rather he replied to questions 'firmly", police said.

The joint forces, taking him along, raided several places on Thursday and Friday to nab outlaws

Islam murder case from Patkelohata Bazar in Tala upazila on Saturday They are Eman Ali, former chairman of Khalil Nagar UP, Nazrul

Islam, son of Laban Sardar of Hajra Kati village, Hafizul Islam, son of Anis Sardar and Lutfor Rahman, son of Shon Sardar of Atarain village in Tala upazila. Sonadanga police are interrogating them.

criminal Shahid and are inhabitants

IO of Manik Saha murder case

did not raid the hideouts of Shahid

where the rickshaw owner and the

person who pulled it are reported to

Secretary, IGP, DG of Anti corrup-

of Pabla

have taken shelter.

persons in-connection with Sirajul votes, a fresh election to elect a secretary will be held afterwards.

Six get 20 years RI for kidnapping BSS, Manikganj

A court here on Thursday sentenced six persons to rigorous imprisonment (RI) for 20 years and six months each for crimes related to kidnapping, trespassing and attempt to murder. The convicts are Moti. Soion

Shahed. Shahidullah. Lal Mia and Abul Kashem, court sources said The court also fined each convict Tk 3,000, in default, to suffer five months'more RI.

Another convict, Hanifa was given 10 and a half years imprisonment. The convict was also fined Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer two months' more RI. Manik home are associates of The convicts forcibly entered the

house of Usman Gani at Matuar Kanda village in Kuliarchar upazila on February 28, 1999. They ransacked the house and looted valuables and injured inmates before kidnapping Usman Gani.

Four of the convicts-Sojon Large number of people of Pabla Shaheed, Lal Mia and Abul have sent Petitions to the prime Kashem-were tried in absentia. minister, the Home Minister, Home

tion, DIG of Khulna Ranga, DC of Obituary Khulna and Commanders of Daulatour and Khalishour thana

OUR CORRESPONDENT, ioint forces drawing their attention to the failure of KMP to make any Moulvibazar

> Usha Rani Goswami, mother of Raiat Kanti Goswami, local correspondent of The Daily Star died at her Moulvibazar residence due to old age ailments on Friday. She was 75.

Wife of Radhika Mohan Goswami, Bangladesh Central Puja Udjapan Parisad Vice President, National Awami Party (NAP-Muzaffar) Vice President, retired journalist of government-owned news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) and former president of Moulvibazar Press Club. Usha Rani was survived by husband, three sons, one daughter, two grand sons and four grand daugh ers to mourn her death

Her Sraddha, a ritual, will be held at 12 noon on March 1.

Relatives, friends and wellwishers are requested to attend there on time



PHOTO STAR

A woman receiving Tk 20,000 agriculture loan from Sonali Bank General Manager (Administration) Md Ziauddin Ahmed at a function held at Imam Nagar Government Primary School in Singair upazila, Manikganj on Thursday. An amount of Tk 2,50,000 was disbursed among 19 poor farmers of Bahadia Soyani model village under a special pilot project of the bank.

The authorities carried out 'need

assessment' and 'risk assessment'

machines for 25

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

UNDP set to start fresh Top criminal uplift activities in CHT

workshop

in the area in 1997.

Sewing

women

distressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) is set to start fresh development activities under a new project in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), officials told this at a workshop in Bandarban on Tuesday.

The workshop on 'Mouza Headmen and Karbari' held at Rajbari, Bandarban, said that about 60 million US dollars could not be utilised due to unrest in the region during the last five years.

The one-year pilot project aiming at bringing people's confidence and socio-economic development, would cover Sadar and Thanchi upazilas in Bandarban. Bilaicharri and Sadar upazilas in Rangamati and Matiranga and Pancharri upazilas in Khagrachhari.

The project would involve private and public organisations responsible for development work in the area, provide 'quick impact fund' or small loan to common people leading to their financial independence. develop coordination among development partners and establish offices in Bandarban, Rangamati, Khagrachhari and the capital.

Although offices were set up but the UN agency could not implement its objectives at the grassroots level due to unrest in CHT.

Project director Michael Hen

nabbed in B'baria **OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria**

project advisor Pradanendu Chakma, Prasenjit Chakma, Khushi A top criminal was nabbed by Brahmanbaria Sadar thana police Ray Tripura, Usha Pru Marma, on Wednesday. Mong A Marma were present at the Arrested Atik was also engage

in arms and drug smuggling. A police team headed by SI Monirul Gias raided Atik's house in Pokurpar area of Brahmanbaria

Pourasabha and arrested him. He is an accused in severa cases filed at Brahmanbaria sadar thana and Akhaura Government Railway Police (GRP), police sources said.

Atik was sent to Brahmanbaria Jail custody, police sources told this correspondent.

Hemp recovered: One arrested

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans

of 7 Rifles Battalion led by Habilder Md

Abu Talal and Habilder Md Tufazzal

Hussain recovered the illegal narcotic

at Kalikatchcha in Sarail upazila. They

also recovered 522 bottles of Indian

Phensidyl, 205 bottles of wine and

7,000 intoxicant tablets

A case was filed.

Twenty five distressed women **OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria** began life anew at their villages in Kasba and Akhura upazilas on One person was arrested and Friday.

37.50-kilogram of hemp was recov-BNP member of parliament (MP) ered from different bordering areas Md Musfiqur Rahman's wife here from February 2-19. Jabunnessa Rehman donated 25 The arrested is Md Ibrahim, son sewing machines to them to start of Younus Mia of Nuapura village in income generating activities in a Kasba upazila.

public meeting here. Chaired by the MP, the meeting was addressed by Akhaura Upazila BNP Secretary N M Hasan Khan, businessman Kazi Istiak, Rumi, Monia Rahman, Muna Rahman, abul Mansur, Masudur Rahman, Selim and Sheikh Ashiqul Bhuiyan Dulal

PHOTO: AMANUR AMAN

No body knows when construction of the Gorai Bridge on Kushtia-Dhaka highway to connect six districts with the capital will be completed. Its construction began six years back. Its design was changed thrice. A Chinese construction firm formulated a new design in 2002 as per directives of the government. But no progress is in sight. Meantime, cost of project has increased to Tk 26 cr from Tk 16 cr.

Manik Saha murder case Police apathy in raid on criminals' hideout

last month by Khulna police.

ward under Daulatpur thana.

Akram and two others.

months

They confessed their involve-

According to reliable sources,

the rickshawpuller who took Manik

home is being harboured by Hosna

Ara and her son Shahid of Pabla

were arrested in connection with

murder of Jessore Bureau Cheif of

Dainik Janakan Shamsur Rahman.

But they were released on bail

Jessore Central Jail after three

Both the women and her son

ment in the murder, along with

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Alleged outlaw Ali Akbar, 28, arrested by joint forces from Ramnagar village under Rupsha thana recently, is being guizzed under remand in connection with journalist Manik Saha murder case.

According to Khulna Police Superintendent Habibur Rahman, mobile phone numbers of some other outlaws have been recovered from Akbar, who belongs to Janajuddho faction of outlawed PBCP

Earlier, PBCP (J) armed cadres Shumon and Bulbul had named Akram as the lone person who threw

Sources further say that the break through in probing the Manik owner of the rickshaw and the the bomb that killed Manik Shah. person who had pulled it to take Shah murder case. Bulbul and Shumon were arrested