

SNAPS

One jailed for possessing arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A court here on Sunday awarded one person to 17 years' jail sentence in an arms case. The convict is Engineer Khondakar Shishir Ali of Radhanagar. He was arrested from a cement factory at Gachpara on October 27, 2001. Later, police recovered a point 32 bore pistol and six bullets from his house, according to his statement. Judge Javed Mostafa Sharif of Fourth Special Tribunal pronounced the verdict.

Death threat to newsman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Unidentified criminals gave death threats to Agailjhara correspondent of Dakkhinanchal, Azad Rahman for writing a story published against extortionists. Azad Rahman complained in a general diary lodged with Agailjhara police station that he had received threats over cell phone. Local press club and Reporters' Unity also condemned the threat.

Barisal city protection work to begin soon

Tk 40 cr project to be completed in current dry season

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Work on the Tk 40.30 crore Barisal city protection embankment project will begin soon and will be completed within the current dry season, high officials of Water Development Board (WDB) disclosed to this correspondent yesterday.

Army will supervise the work at field level so that it can be completed within the stipulated period.

The project was undertaken earlier and its preparation began about two months back. It got a formal start during Saturday's visit to Barisal by Water Resources Minister Hafiz Uddin Ahmed. The minister visited the project sites and held elaborate discussions with WDB officials, the sources said.

Under the project, a 10-kilometre

embankment will be constructed from Palashpur river terminal to Dapdapia ferry terminal and along the bank of Kirtonkhola river to protect the divisional headquarter from erosion by river. Concrete blocks and geo-bags will be dumped in the areas to protect the embankments.

The project also includes construction of a bridge, regulators and sluice gates.

Work order for the project will be given soon, the officials said. Tender for the project was floated and finalised earlier, they said.

On Saturday, Minister Hafiz Uddin Ahmed visited erosion affected Charkawna, Charbaria, Char Abdani, Launch Ghat, DC Ghat, Sagardi and Dapdapia Ghat near the city and its outskirts and

held meetings with local people's representatives and officials.

City Mayor Mujibor Rahman Sarwar MP, Director General of the WDB Mokhesur Rahman and other high officials were present.

The minister also reviewed the progress of implementation of the Tk 19 crore Bhola town protection project.

At the review meeting held at Bhola on the same day, the minister was informed that about 87 per cent of the work for protecting 2.7 km banks of the Meghna in the area has been completed. Concrete blocks and geo-bags have been dumped to protect the embankments.

Army is supervising the work being done by WDB.

The meeting was told that 4.91 lakh concrete blocks and 3.14 lakh

geo-bags were dumped along river banks in Talukgram, Tajumuddin, Bhuiyan Kandi and Choumohani to protect those from erosion.

It was also told that the most vulnerable 8-km alternative embankment at Tajumuddin would be protected after implementation of the project.

Hafizuddin also visited the project area and asked officials to complete the project within the stipulated time. WDB Director General Mokhesuzzaman, Chief Engineer (Southern Zone) Mohammad Kamruzzaman, Bhola Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Abdul Mannan were present during the visit.

COUNTER-CASE BY IMPORTER OF ROTTEN WHEAT Court summons food secretary, DC, 8 others

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The Nilphamari Sub-Judge Court has summoned the Secretary of the Food Ministry, Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner and eight others to appear before the court today and clarify their position in the matter relating to seizure of a huge consignment of rotten wheat imported by a company last month.

The wheat was imported by Hazi

Mustaq Ahmed, owner of Sonia Enterprise of Syedpur, from India.

The eight others are Additional District Magistrate and Assistant Police Superintendent (Syedpur circle), Syedpur UNO, customs superintendent, food inspector, manager of Sydpur Islami Bank, proprietor of C&F agent Shoshi Enterprise and the Indian exporting farm LMJ International of Punjab.

The court order followed filing of a case against them by the importer

on October 10.

In the case, Hazi Mustaq alleged that he had imported good quality wheat from India and he has all relevant papers. He claimed that after entering Bangladesh the goods got customs clearance.

But a good quantity of the wheat was found rotten. For this, the Indian exporter is responsible. He also urged the authorities concerned to stop payment to the Indian exporter against the wheat.

Earlier, on September 19, the officer-in-charge of Syedpur thana, at the directive of the district administration, filed a case against the importer and the C&F agent--Shashi Enterprise.

The case was filed after a five-member probe body headed by Additional District Magistrate Nitai Pada Shaha after investigation found 54 per cent of the rotten wheat uneatable. But Hazi Mustaq got bail in the case from High Court on October 6.

Meanwhile, Syedpur police on September 12 seized a huge quantity of imported rotten Indian wheat from Syedpur Railway station goods yard. This was part of Hazi Mustaq's imported consignment of 2020 tonnes. Part of the consignment was unloaded by the importer before police seized the rotten wheat.

Notorious criminal Azad held in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Sunday arrested Abul Kalam Azad, an alleged notorious criminal, from Rangpur town.

Azad is also secretary of Rangpur Vehicle Workers Union.

A Rab team raided the union office and caught him along with four others.

At a press briefing yesterday morning, Rab said they recovered two pistols and one revolver from the possession of azad.

According to RAB, Azad is a notorious criminal, known in the northern districts.

He faces ten cases including some for murder and possessing illegal arms, filed with different police station in the northern districts, they said.

They said Abul Kalam and the four others would be handed over to police after interrogation.

The four others nabbed are Solaiman Ali, Nurul Islam, Anil and Shahjahan.

Robbery in guise of Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An armed gang robbed two houses in guise of Rab (Rapid Action Battalion) at Sultampur village in Mirpur upazila on Sunday.

The gang entered the house of Abu Taleb in guise of Rab and tied family members at gunpoint and looted cash and ornaments worth Tk 20,000 and cloths worth Tk 70,000, according to police.

100 pc sanitation, pipeline water in 2 CHT villages

MONIRUL ALAM, back from in Kaptai

Rangamati: Two remote hill villages Kaptai upazila, inhabited by indigenous people, have been brought under cent percent sanitation coverage and supply of safe water.

All 30 families in Uzanchhari and 40 in Dullonnya Marmapara village now use sanitary latrine.

"Our children now use sanitary toilet, soap for post defecation cleanliness, cut nails and wash hands before taking meal", said Aung Shi Khoi Mamma, a youth at Dullonnya.

"We earlier had to rush to nearby jungle for defecation, even at night and during rain. It was so painful".

Earlier, people of these villages suffered for want of inadequate

supply of water for drinking and household use. They had to collect drinking water from far away Chharas (streams in hills), which took three to four hours a day.

Rangamati Deputy Commissioner Dr Jafar Ahmed Khan at a simple function held at Dullonnya village yesterday handed over documents of management of 'Water Supply

Technology' to village people.

It is a success by NGOs that indigenous people now realise the importance of hygiene living, have changed their life and age old tradition, the DC said.

The water supply project was done by Green Hill, a local NGO under a Sustainable Safe Water Supply and Sanitation Programme', implemented with funds provided by the government and Water Aid Bangladesh (WAB).

Local Union Parishad Chairman Hla Mong and Green Hill Executive Director Mong Thoi Ching also addressed the function.

Safe water is supplied to houses through pipes from a reservoir in the two villages.

"Living in hygiene conditions has brought a major change in our life. I am now aware of diseases and getting fruitful results. It has reduced my expenses and saved time", said Aung Kla Taoma, a woman VDC (Village Development Committee) member.

The Green Hill has formed VDC at each village to mobilise villagers under the programme.

"Diseases like jaundice, malaria, viral fever and diarrhoea have been reduced after introduction of safe water supply", said the Green Hill Executive Director. The NGO started working with the project in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in 1999.

"Their expense for treatment has also been reduced significantly as they now rarely fall sick", he said.

Green Hill also conducts 'hygiene education campaign' at each village under its programme.



PHOTO: STAR  
Rangamati Deputy Commissioner Dr Jafar Ahmed Khan handing over documents of management of 'Water Supply Technology' to villagers.

8x2

Tk 25 cr green chilli damaged by flood in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Flood and incessant rains have damaged green chilli on 956 hectares of land in four upazilas, according to the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) officials.

About 6,000 chilli growers have been facing a loss of Tk 25 crore, officials and victims told this correspondent.

Farmers usually harvest 90 to 100 maunds of green chilli by utilising only 33 decimals of land during September-October. They earn about 70,000 taka from the yield, according to growers.

"Every year I earn at least Tk 1.4 lakh by cultivating green chilli on two bighas of land, but this year all chilli plants have been damaged due to heavy downpour", Mohammad Ali, a

farmer of Khardo-Kusundi village in Sadar upazila said to The Daily Star.

While talking to this correspondent, Saifullah, another farmer of Ghoramara village disclosed that green chilli plants on his three bighas of land have been destroyed due to waterlogging caused by incessant rainfalls. He said he does not know how to repay the bank loan and maintain his eight-member family.

Abut Taher another farmer of Parnanduali village suggested that the government should undertake a rehabilitation scheme for green chilli farmers.

Meanwhile, the DAE deputy director Osiul Islam informed that he had already sent a rehabilitation proposal to the higher authorities recently.

8 babies die of pneumonia in Gopalganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

Eight children died of pneumonia in five upazilas in 10 days as the disease is spreading very fast.

About 817 children were attacked with the deadly disease.

The victims are Lucky, six-month-old daughter of Biku Sheikh, Ramim, six-month-old son of Shah Alam, Sazzad, 22 days old son of Nazmul, Shaheb Ali, four-month-old son of Bachhu Daria, Babu, 11 days old son of Rana Sheikh, Samrat, two months old son of Masud Ali Sheikh, Oishik, one month-old son of Anu Sheikh and Shanjeeb, 18 days old son of Bipul Roy, according to hospital sources.

Every day 24 to 28 children are coming to hospitals for treatment from different parts of the district.

Over 130 pneumonia patients were treated at the children's ward of Gopalganj Sadar Hospital on Monday. Only 14 beds were reserved for children while others were flooring.



PHOTO: STAR  
Chandpur Municipal Chairman Shafiqur Rahman Bhuiya opened a "Partex Gallery" in the town recently. Ashfaque-Ul-Kabir, General Manager (Marketing), of Partex Furniture, its Sales Promotion Manager AKM Nazir and Chandpur Press Club President Iqbal Bin Bashir were among others present on the occasion.

7x3

6x3