SNÄPS

Licences of 2 **C&F** agents cancelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhir

Licences of the two clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents at Bhomra land port were cancelled on Saturday for foreign certificates. The agents are M/S Sabbir Enterprise owned by Shahanur Rahman and M/S Forhad International owned by Wahidul Islam. Their licences were cancelled as they had got those by submitting false certificates, sources at the land port said. Preparations are on to file criminal cases against them.

5 Rab-posers held in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Villagers caught five youths as they tried to collect toll by posing as members of Rapid Action Battaion (Rab). The incident took place at Joynagar village in Shyamnagar upazila. The villagers beat and handed them over to police. Police said the accused are Ujjal of Nakipur village and Chanchal, Mokbul Hossain, Kislu and Abdus Sabur of Badar Ghata village. They had gone to the house of Zahurul Islam Thursday night and demanded money, impersonating Rab members. When asked later, arrested Mokbul Hossain however told newsmer that Zahurul Islam is his brother-in-law and he along his accomplices had gone there only to threaten him as he took a second wife. But police said the youths went there to collect toll identifying themselves as Rab members. A case has been filed with Shyamnagar thana

Pneumonia. diarrhoea claim 5 in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Pneumonia and diarrhoea have broken out in an alarming form in Gaibandha Sadar and Fulchhari upazilas due to the ongoing cold spell in the district

Pneumonia has claimed three children in two days. They are Rabbi. 2. son of Raiu Mia of Kholabari village in Gaibandha Sadar upazila, 15-day-old baby of Bablu Mia of Chandia village and Surobala, 2, daughter of Harinath of Balashi village in Fulchhari upazila.

Diarrhoea has claimed two children during the period. The victims are Tauheed, a nine-monthold baby son of Kushi Mia of Fakirpara in Gaibandha Pourasabha and Maksuda Begum.7. daughter of Musa Mia of Bongram village in Sadullapur

Sixty other children were attacked with the two diseases.

Fifteen children were admitted to Gaibandha hospital with pneumonia diarrhoea complaints in two

When contacted, the Civil Surgeon (CS) of Gaibandha told The Daily Star the situation is under

Erratum

In a story headlined 'The blind torchbearer', published in the National page on January 20, the name of Mymensingh Deputy Commissioner was mistakenly mentioned as Abu Saleh Md Zakaria instead of Saifuddin Ahmed Majumder. We regret the inadver-

Reopen Chilahati land Sharp decline in wheat yield port, rail link with India

Shortest route to India, Nepal, Bhutan and China to boost trade and tourism, business circles say

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

from Bangladesh to India, Nepal, Bhutan and even China can be reestablished by reopening the link from Chilahati in Nilphamari district to Holdibari just across the border in India, which would boost trade and

The distance between Chilahati rail station and Holdibari is only 11.3 km, of which 8.10 km rail track is in Bangladesh and 3.24 km in India. The route was closed on September 6, 1965, a day after the Indo-Pak

After opening of the Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge, the then Awami League government had decided in 1997 to reopen the route from Chilahati to the border, but the decision is yet to be imple-

Chilahati with all business and transit facilities and infrastructures built during British period, can facilitate landlocked Nepal and Bhutan to use Mongla port in Khulna. The two countries are very much interested to use to the Mongla port for their export-import trade. business circles here said talking to this correspondent.

In 1953, a land customs office was set up near Chilahati railway station for transit of passengers and goods. The Chilahati Merchants Association was one of the big business organisations in northern districts.

President of Nilphamari Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sohel Parvez said ChilahatiHoldibari rail link can play an important role in boosting trade with these countries and promote

Unlike many important land ports in the country, Chilahati has rail link,



Once busy Chilahati railway station is now virtually a desolate place though there are all facilities and infrastructures

which can considerably reduce transport cost in export-import trade. Chilahati has direct rail link with Khulna via Parbotipur, Shantahar, Iswardi, Chuadanga and Jessore. This can be extended up to Mongla port, he said.

Banglabandha in Panchagarh district and Burimari in Lalmonirhat are two important land ports but have no rail link. Road transport cost to the ports is higher, he said.

Local people, joined by businessmen organised demonstrations on several occasions last year for reopening of Chilahati land port and the rail link, but to no response

The RCCI believes the ministry

concerned will now move swiftly

and prepare a project paper to

place it at the next meeting of the

ECNEC (Executive Committee of

National Economic Council), he

Vice-president Mohammed

Zahangir and its Executive

Committee members Nowshad

Hossen and Moazzem Hossen

Lablu were present at the view

exchange meeting, held at the

the Prime Minister for her initiative.

had expected steps for gas supply

to Rangpur and Dinajpur closely on

the heels of opening of the

Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge.

Though belated, the Prime

Minister's initiative has raised

Mohammed Zahangir said

many prospective investors in the

two districts can not set up indus-

tries in the Uttara EPZ at Sayedpur

set up an industry at Uttara EPZ

but could not commission it for

want of gas. Using furnace oil in the

industry would raise the production

police in Comilla

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Most wanted criminal in Katchua

police station area, Zahir, is carrying

out criminal activities in parts of Comilla and Chandpur, evading

Police said Zahir, ringleader of a

gang of highway robbers, went on

hiding after police started haunting

him. He is accused in a number of

criminal cases filed with the police

hiding, locals alleged that Zahir

often roamed at Mear Bazar and its

surrounding areas and carried out

Officer-in-Charge of the police

station said Zahir, son of Taiub Ali of

Padua village had set ablaze the

private car of local BNP leader

Yousuf on August 21 last year. He is

a charge-sheeted accused in the

case filed with Katchua police

Zahir had attacked Abdul Haque

near Mear Bazar in Comilla on

Dhaka Chittagong highway and

kidnapped him. Keeping him hos-

criminal activities from there.

station after the incident.

Though police said Zahir went on

A hardened criminal evading

Nowshad Hossen said, " I have

The RCC executives thanked

They said people of the region

RCCI office recently.

great hopes, they said.

due to absence of gas.

cost". he said.

police dragnet

station, police said.

Among others, RCCI Senior

from the authorities, he said.

Abu Musa, general secretary of Chilahati Land Port Implementation Committee, said their reopening would be a boost to economic activities in northern districts, affected by monga every year. This would also promote intra-SAARC

Across the border. Holdibar has good rail and road communications with rest of India and its neighbourina countries.

From British period till September 1965, the famous Darjeeling Mail used to run from Chilahati to Calcutta via Darsona.

Direct rail link can be established from Chilahati to Dhaka via Jamuna

Using the Chilahati-Holdibari rail route, it would be easy to reach Kakorvita, a bordering business centre in Nepal, only 90 km away. Bhutan's bordering business town Funt Soling could be reached via Shiliguri and Joyga.

This would be the shortest rail link with China via Shiliguri in India and Nepal. The proposed India-China highway would open up greater trade prospects with China through Shiliguri and Gangtok

in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Wheat production in Nilphamari district has come down to one fourth in past several years.

Officials of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) said this is due to change in climate.

The DAE targeted production of 40,000 metric tons of wheat from 20,000 hectors of land this year. Though this is lesser than earlier production, the target is unlikely to be fulfilled. Farmers cultivated wheat only on 9,950 hectares this year and the production will not exceed 15,000 tonnes, they said.

Earlier, wheat was cultivated on more than 40,000 hectors of land production would rally around one lakh tonnes. The cultivation declined gradually.

Talking to this correspondent some farmers said high price of seed, fertiliser and diesel for irrigation discouraged them in wheat cultivation

Besides, change in climate is also a major factor. They said, earlier they used to sow wheat in late Agrahayan and early Poush (Bangla months). The winter used to last till the end of Magh. Now, winter ends by the middle of Magh, when plants start flowering. The crop does not grow if the winter ends, they

In the last few years, the winter season started earlier and ended earlier, they said.

Doctor in custody

DAUGHTER'S ADMISSION TO SCHOOL

for 'forging' state minister's signature

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A government doctor has been handed over to police by Barisal Deputy Commissioner for submitting a forged recommendation of State Minister for Education A N M Ehsanul Haque Milon for admission of his daughter to a school.

The accused doctor, A K M Siddiqur Rahman, is Sub-Assistant Community Medical Officer at Charkawa.

When asked at Kotwali thana yesterday, he said he collected the recommendation letter through one of his relatives and knows nothing about forgery. But he declined to disclose the identity of that relative. The physician had submitted an

application on Saturday to Aiita Rani Samadder, headmistress of Barisal Government Girls' High School, with the forged recommendation for admission of his daughter Tanzin Akter Muna to Class VI. After receiving the recommenda-

tion, the headmistress met with DC M Abdul Monaf Patwari and the chairman of the school governing body and discuss the matter It was proved that the fake letter

letterhead and his signature was forged. As the doctor came to the school on Sunday for admission of his daughter, the headmistress asked him to meet the DC, who handed him

was written on the State Minister

Didarul Alam, duty officer at Barisal Kotwali thana said the physician was detained under Section 54 and would be sent to court after the school authorities file a case

BCL calls strike at JU Thursday

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University (JU) unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has called a daylong strike on the campus on Thursday.

The strike will be observed in protest against attack on its convener Sohel Parvez by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) President Parvez Mallik and Organising Secretary Robi on Sunday. He was leading a protest procession organised in support of the 60-hour hartal enforced by the Awami League.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting held on

A memorandum was also submitted to Vice Chancellor Prof Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman demanding punishment to the culprits.

No classes or examinations were held on the campus for the third consecutive day on Monday.

STEPS FOR PIPELINE GAS SUPPLY

Rangpur Chamber thanks PM

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

The business circle in Rangpur has thanked the Prime Minister for her initiative for pipeline gas supply to Rangour and Dinaipur.

A recent letter from the Prime nister's Office asked the of Energy and Mineral Resources to take steps to bring greater Rangour and Dinaiour districts under pipe line gas network.

There is no alternative to industrialisation to alleviate poverty in northern districts and pipeline gas supply is vital for this, President of Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) Mostafa Azad Chowdhury said while exchanging views with newsmen.

The PMO issued the order after the RCCI appealed to the Prime Minister through FBCCI (Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industries) for gas creeps into a child's life

> STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Where liquor

Children at sweepers' colony in Rajshahi city become addicted to liquor at an age as early as eight to

They start by drinking occasionally, mainly at religious festivals, ing to a survey done by a local NGO, Trinamul. It was funded by UCEP, an international organisation working for poor children in Bangladesh.

They drink only Tari, made in their houses.

The survey said, cent percent children of the colonies start life with sweeping as they are not welcome at educational institutions or any other job.

The findings were revealed at a dialogue on condition of children of sweepers' colonies, held at GDRC auditorium at Ghoramara in the

Dainik Barta Editor SMA Quader, journalists Abdus Sabur and SM Saju addressed the meeting chaired by Trinamul Secretary Rajib Uddin.

Speakers at the dialogue stressed the need for coordinated effort to eliminate the present discriminations to children.

tage, he snatched a mobile phone

set, Tk 7,000 and took his signature

of dire consequence if anybody

PCJSS condemns

The Parbattya Chattagram Jono

Sanghaty Samity (PCJSS) in a

statement issued here on Sunday

condemned the grenade attack on

Awami League rally at Habiganj that

killed former finance minister Shah

AMS Kibria and four others party

General Secretary Chandrashekhor

Chakma said anti-democratic forces

have continued their attack on secu-

lar and progressive forces to elimi-

The statement signed by PCJSS

grenade attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

activists on Thursday.

nate them.

Locals said nobody dares to file any case against him as he threats

on two blank stamps.

protests his activities.

Habigani

3-day BDR-BSF meet begins tomorrow at Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A three-day high level BDR-BSF meeting begins at Rangpui Porjaton Motel tomorrow.

A 13-member team of BSF

officials will arrive here today. BDR sources said the meeting will discuss push-in by BSF, smuggling and cross-border crimes in Khulna-Kurigram bor-Deputy Director General of

BDR Brigadier General Golam Rabbani will lead the Bangladesh side while Inspector General of 14 South Bengal

Frontier of BSF Rajecndra Shingh will lead the Indian side. BDR has taken preparations to make the meeting a success.

Adequate security measures have been taken in the town and a large number of law enforcers deployed around the motel. A BDR source preferring unanimity said this is a routine annual meeting between BDR and BSF, held in Bangladesh and India

7 get life in Habiganj triple murder

alternately.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A court in Habiganj on Sunday gave life term to seven persons for a triple murder in the district in 2001.

Nine others were jailed for two years in the case.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Aminul Islam gave life term to former chairman of Kagapasha Union Parishad Abdus Shahid, Abdul Latif, Arfan Ali, Jarfan Ali, Abdus Sobhan, Ramjan Ali and Abdul Matin

They had killed Zahed Ali, Dewan Ali and Taher Ali during a clash over fishing right in Kushiyara river at Chamakpur village in Baniachang upazila on December 17, 2001.

Sixty-three people were chargesheeted and 24 witnesses were examined in the case.

Five of those chargesheeted died during trial.

In a counter case for rioting over the same incident, the judge sentenced five persons including former Upazila Chairman of Baniachana Nurul Amin to one year imprisonment and fined them Tk 5,000 each

13x3