

280 kg of cannabis seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail
Police seized 12 sacks containing 280 kg of cannabis worth around Tk 28 lakh from a bus on the eastern end of Bangabandhu Bridge yesterday.
Superintendent of Police in Tangail Mahbub Alam said two police teams took position at different points near the bridge on Monday night. They stopped a North-Bengal-bound truck from Brahmanbaria at the weigh station on the east side around 3:45am and seized the 12 sacks from the vehicle.
Two hundred kilogrammes of cannabis worth about Tk 20 lakh were seized from a North-Bengal-bound truck in the same area on January 22.

Extortion rampant

The illegal practice by toll collectors going on in Bogra

MAMUN-UR-RASHID, Bogra
Extortion from drivers of battery-run easy-bikes and rickshaws has been going on at random in the town and even in the 12 upazilas of the district for the last several months.
The illegal practice is still continuing although Roads and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader forbade it on January 28, 2017 while speaking with the officials of the district administration.
Many drivers were victimised by the toll collectors when they refused to give toll. Dalim Ali, 25, of Rameshwarpur village in Gabtoli upazila is one of them.
Dalim went to Bogra Press Club on Saturday to inform journalists as the toll collectors snatched his battery-run auto-rickshaw, demanding Tk 2,500 for registration, because he did not give them toll.
Drivers of such vehicles said extortionists collect around Tk 3 lakh per day from all kinds of battery-run vehicles in the district.
Battery-run auto-rickshaw and rickshaw drivers of the district said the extortionists have been operating under the banner of Bogra District Charger Rickshaw and Van Owners' Association led by Tufan Sarker, a trader of Choksutrapur area in the town.
A driver of battery-run auto-rickshaw said he has to pay a total of Tk 60 per day to the Bogra District Battery-run Auto-rickshaw Owners' Association, while a battery-run-rickshaw driver has to pay Tk 20 per day.
Rabbi Mia, representative of the district charger rickshaw/van owners' association, said they collect Tk 20 per day from drivers and Tk 1,500 for registration with the association for the welfare of the transport workers.
He could not say what initiative had been taken for the welfare of the drivers.
Deputy Commissioner of Bogra Md Ashraf Uddin said the district administration has informed the police administration regarding the extortion and asked them to take action against the culprits.
Additional Superintendent of Police of Bogra Md Abdul Jalil said action has already been taken against the toll collectors and more actions will be taken if the extortionists continue the illegal activity.



A collector receives money from the driver of a battery-run rickshaw in Bogra town. Inset, receipts of various organisations that take toll from battery-run rickshaws and auto-rickshaws in Bogra. PHOTO: STAR

Barguna madrasa boy chained

Accused teacher sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali
A madrasa teacher was sent to jail on Monday on charge of chaining a 10-year-old student to a 6 kg piece of wood in Pathorghata upazila of Barguna.
The boy is Sifat Ullah, 10, a student at Baitul Falah Noorani Madrasa in Natunbazar bridge area under Pathorghata municipality and son of Sagir Mollah of the municipality.
The boy's mother Aysha Begum filed a case with Pathorghata Police Station in this connection on Monday.
Locals came to know of the matter on Monday when Sifat went to nearby a hotel to have breakfast. Some locals took photos of Sifat before the teacher took him back to the madrasa.
Officer-in-Charge (OC) of the police station SM Ziaul Haque said they rescued the boy from the madrasa and arrested the teacher, Nabi Hossain.
Locals said Sifat was admitted to the madrasa in January and tried to run away from there on February 5 to avoid the pressure of studying.
The boy's father Sagir Mollah said, "I admitted my son to a primary school first, but he would often run away, so I took him to the madrasa."
Sagir admitted the boy to the madrasa and requested the teacher to keep him chained so that he could not flee.
Nabi Hossain said he chained boy as per request from his father.



One killed in clash over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat
A man was killed and three others were injured in a clash over land dispute at Dhairkhata village in Sadar upazila yesterday.
The deceased was Safur Ali, 65, son of late Tareya Mahmud of the village.
The injured are the victim's elder brother Nur Islam, 70, Nur Islam's son Lutfar Rahman, 42, and Lutfar's wife Hamida Begum, 35, of the village. They were admitted to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital.
Police said there was a longstanding dispute over 20 decimals of land between Safur and Shamsul Islam, 62, son of late Fatullah Munsil.

TORTURE ON WAR HEROINE, FAMILY

Scot-free accused threaten victims to withdraw case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh
Talking to this correspondent, Rokeya said, "Our family turned down Khalil's proposal to marry one of my school going daughters one month ago. Then he started hurling abuses at them now and then."
"Following an altercation over the matter at local Bogar Bazar Friday morning, Khalil and Shakil started beating Sekandar. They also attacked me and my mother when we rushed there," she said.
Moymona alleged that two years ago, her neighbour Awlad Hossain beat her mercilessly following a dispute over a piece of land.
"Awlad, Khalil and Shakil are trying to grab our ancestral homestead for long," she said.
"Khalil's cousin Awlad Hossain and maternal uncle Golam Mustafa are threatening us of dire consequences if the case is not withdrawn. I informed police about the threats this noon (Tuesday)," said Sekander.
The OC said stern action will be taken against the accused and their men who are giving threat to the victims.
Md Anwar Hossain, commander of Muktiyoddha Sangsad's Mymensingh district unit, demanded immediate arrest of the attackers to bring them to book.

2 UPDF men held with arms, bullets

A CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari
Security force arrested two members of United Peoples' Democratic Front (UPDF) from Napatipara village in Panchhari upazila of the district yesterday.
They also seized a pistol, one light gun (LG), five bullets and one set of army dress from their possession, said police.
The arrestees are Suhanta Chakma alias Tomesh, 30, and Sonamoni Chakma alias Vagya, 52.
On secret information, the security force raided the area in the morning and arrested the duo with the arms and bullets, said Abdul Jabber, officer-in-charge of Panchhari Police Station.

Cry for bridge construction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram
People in Nageshwari upazila of the district are demanding reconstruction of Balaghat Bridge over Goddear Beel in the municipality area.
Residents of 15 villages of Hasnabad union, Newashi union and Nageshwari municipality have been facing problems in communication for over six months as the bridge is almost unusable.
The 14-metre-long footbridge was constructed over Goddear Beel on Nageshwari-Newashi road at Tapurchar village under Nageshwari municipality in 1991 by Nageshwari Upazila Parishad. Over 15 thousand people of 15 villages used the bridge for going to the upazila headquarters and transporting goods.
The wing walls collapsed and the bridge was partially damaged by the flood last year. It was repaired by dumping sandbags and setting up wooden platforms over the collapsed sections so that pedestrians, rickshaws and push-carts could cross the bridge, ward No 6 Councillor of Nageshwari municipality Mominur Rahman said, adding that the work was done with municipality funds and assistance from locals.
Over 800 students use the bridge to go to their institutions, while the villagers have to travel an extra three kilometres for transporting their goods from Nageshwari town, said Mominur.
Badrul Alam, 32, a trader of Badizamalpur village in the municipality said, "We have not been able to cross the bridge with our vehicles for more than six months. Sometimes, pedestrians meet with accidents on the collapsed sections of the bridge at night. We have been asking our public representatives to reconstruct the bridge for a long time, but to no avail."
Shamsul Haque, 45, of Kanipara village, said the bridge should be constructed immediately as a large number of students use it for going to their institutions.
"I submitted a proposal to the Nageshwari Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) one week ago. The UNO assured me that he would take steps regarding the matter," Mominur said.
Upazila Engineer of Local Government Engineering Department Badsha Alamgir said, "We have prepared a project for constructing some bridges in the upazila this year and sent it to the higher authorities for approval. The Balaghat Bridge has been included in the project."



PICTURE TELLS THE TALE: Locals set a wood and bamboo structure to use the badly broken Balaghat Bridge over Goddear Beel on Nageshwai-Newashi road at Tapurchar village in Nageshwari municipality of Kurigram. PHOTO: STAR



Labourers load logs on a truck parked on Pirojpur-Nazirpur-Gopalganj road near Kadamatala bazar in Pirojpur Sadar upazila. PHOTO: STAR

Log-laden trucks pose risk of road accidents

Two of a family electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur
Trucks parked on Pirojpur-Nazirpur-Gopalganj and Pirojpur-Indurkani roads for loading logs pose risk of accidents.
It is an almost a regular scene on the roads in Sadar and Indurkani upazilas of the district, thanks to the authorities' negligence to the matter.
Hundreds of buses, pickups and other vehicles ply the roads for going to Dhaka and other parts of the country every day.
As no one bothers about the matter, traders randomly load and unload logs on road without any obstacles, said locals.
Trucks are often seen loading logs kept on both sides of the roads, they said, adding that the labourers even weigh the logs there.
A big truck occupies half of the road, said Shafikul Islam, a motorcyclist.
"As a result, we cannot notice any vehicle coming from the other side and due to this, accident may take place anytime," he said.
"Nowadays, it has become very risky to drive vehicles on the roads due to the log-laden trucks parked there," said Ansar Ali, a bus driver.
Another motorcyclist Mizanur Rahman urged the law enforcement agencies to take punitive action against the traders who load and unload logs on roads.
Otherwise, traders can create separate spots beside the road for loading logs, he said.
"We only load logs," said worker Sahadat Hossain while loading logs on Pirojpur-Nazirpur-Gopalganj road, adding that they only go there when they are asked to load logs.
Being informed, Sadar police removed the log-laden trucks from Pirojpur-Nazirpur-Gopalganj road a few days ago but it has started again.
Two people died from electrocution in Kalai upazila of Joypurhat yesterday, police said.
The deceased were Jahangir Hossain, 23, son of Janab Ali of Margram village and his nephew Shakib Hossain, 13, son of Jahurul Haque of Jagdambur village.
Punat Union Parishad Chairman Abdul Kuddus said they went near a fish pond in Shantinagar village and came in contact with the live electric wires that encircle the pond to prevent theft of fish. They died on the spot.
Police recovered the bodies and sent them to Joypurhat Modern Hospital for autopsy.