

## NEWS SNAPS

## Youth with pistol held

**UNB, Jhalakati**  
A young bookshop owner was arrested along with a pistol in the town.

The arrested was identified as Mahlab, 24. Alleged top criminal Shamim Talukder, who was arrested by the members of joint force, gave him a packet to keep with him a few days back. Mahtab kept it in good faith, as he did not think there might be a pistol within the packet. He was produced before the court and sent to jail on Friday.

## Pipeline burst causes fire

**UNB, Keraniganj**  
A huge fire broke out after a gas pipeline exploded at Joynagar here Thursday night creating panic among the locals.

However, there was no report of any casualties in the incident blamed for irresponsibility of the Titas gas officials and employees. Fire fighters from Sadarghat and Fulbari stations along with locals put off the blaze after nearly one hour of frantic efforts.

## Attack on 3 traders

**UNB, Narsingdi**  
Three traders were injured in an attack by miscreants at Srinagar Madya Bazaar in Sadar upazila of Narsingdi Wednesday night. The wounded were admitted to Dr Malek Diagnostic centre. Witnesses said about 10 alleged criminals locked in an altercation with a trader, Alamgir, and at one stage they mercilessly beat the trader. The criminals also beat up two other traders - Khokon and Azahar - as they went to rescue Alamgir.

## 4 unnatural deaths in Jessore in two days

**UNB, Jessore**

Four unnatural deaths were reported from Jessore district on Thursday-Friday.

Police and hospital sources said Tumpa Rani, 12, who was critically injured in a road accident here, succumbed to her injuries at Jessore General Hospital.

Besides, Monir Hossain, 35, of village Sonapur in Chowgacha upazila, was crushed under the wheels of a 'Nosimon' (power driven van) near Hakimpur Bazaar.

Septuagenarian Nalu Mia, 70, was killed after he fell down from a rickshaw van here Thursday evening.

In addition, a teenaged girl Rozina Khatun allegedly committed suicide at village Islampur in Sadar upazila following a family quarrel.

Separate unnatural death (UD) cases were filed with the police.

## Cold wave takes toll on winter crops in 2 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing cold wave has been affecting badly the cultivation of winter crops in Nilphamari and Chapainawabganj districts.

**Our Nilphamari Correspondent reports:** Cultivation of winter crops is being affected greatly owing to shivering cold in Nilphamari. Potato leaves are getting squeezed from severe cold on a vast tract of cultivated lands and the plants are getting rotten. Serious damage of all crops including tobacco was reported.

In this IRRI-Boro season, paddy crop roots are being damaged. Last season "Shikar Pacha disease" inflicted huge damage to aman crop. Because of outbreak of this disease, paddy output fell short of target by one third. Now at the outset of current season after a severe crisis of boro seeds, the growers are confronting with damage of crop roots.

The lowest temperature was recorded 8 degrees Celsius during

the last fortnight here. The sun was not visible. Dense fog made everything dark much before evening which continued till Thursday. Even noon was as dark as evening. At night dew fell like rainfall. Movement of the town dwellers slowed down. None came out of their homes without much necessity.

Recession continues in business for want of customers. Day labourers are out of job, as none is willing to engage them due to slow activity. Sufferings of the old and the children know no bound.

Destitutes, poor and people of low-income group are suffering much for want of winter clothes. In such cold, dogs and cats are cried aloud at the dead of night. Various winter diseases broke out in the district.

It was learnt from the office of the district Civil Surgeon that cold diarrhoea, fever and asthma patients are crowding the hospital in large number. Eight deaths were reported though the Civil Surgeon office sources denied it. In this situation of

cold and dense fog, incidents of theft and hijacking went up.

Last week in dense fog, a Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) bus met a head-on collision with a mini bus on Nilphamari-Domar Road near the district police line. The accident left two dead and 30 others wounded. Condition of eight injured persons who were admitted to the district modern hospital became serious.

For protection from severe cold, destitute people, poor and the low-income group of people are crowding the second hand warm cloth markets. But the shop owners ask for prices two to three times higher than the actual price. Although there were some isolated efforts to distribute warm clothes at private level, but that was too insufficient than the demand.

However, no move for distributing warm clothes from the district administration level is still in sight. Recently, 10,000 blankets were sanctioned for 10 districts from the Prime Minister's (PM) office. The

allocation for Nilphamari district is too meager in comparison with the requirement for a large number of cold affected people.

**UNB from Chapainawabganj adds:** A cold wave has been sweeping the district paralysing normal life and hampering boro farming.

Deep fog and chilly weather forced locals to stay indoors as the dusk descended.

Sufferings of the poor people know no bound, as they are yet to get any warm cloth from any quarter.

The poor people, particularly living in Barendra and shoal areas, were seen burning straws in a bid to warm them.

Many are approaching rich men for pieces of warm clothes.

The farmers could not start tilling their land due to deep fog and severe cold although seedbeds are ready.

Local Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said cultivation of boro paddy is being delayed due to bad weather.

## Probe into rail crash under way

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A three-member inquiry team led by the Joint Secretary (Railway) Abdul Malek began investigation of the reasons of a train accident which occurred near the Koidanga bridge area at about 11:30 pm at night on December 21 last year.

Two running trains of the Indian IRCON company collided killing six people and injuring 17 others. After the accident the railway authorities suspended five railway employees for negligence of duty.

Other members of the investigation committee are Joint Director General of Bangladesh Railway Sultan Ahmed Talukder, Chief Planning Officer Abdul Halim Miah.

## Bandits leave schoolgirls injured

UNB, Jhalakathi

Four people, including three schoolgirls were injured, when robbers swooped on a village in Kathalia upazila here early Wednesday.

Villagers said some 10 bandits attacked the house of Abul Hossain Master at village Mashubunia and looted goods after beating him and his three school-going daughters - Ruma, Tania and Maksuda.

The robbers also looted goods from three other houses at nearby village Hetalbania on the same night.

Two separate general dairies (GDs) were lodged with police in this connection.



M Ayubur Rahman, Chairman, Board of Directors of Janata Bank inaugurates a new branch of the bank in the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) area of Comilla region. Murshid Kuli Khan, Managing Director of the bank is also seen in the picture.

## 535 murdered last year in SW region

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A total of 535 persons including two sub-inspectors of police and two journalists were murdered in the southwestern (SW) region of the country last year.

One hundred fifty two kidnappings, 175 armed robberies and 163 rapes were committed during the same period, it is learnt from official records received from the office of DIG, Khulna Range.

Of 536 murders, 25 were committed in January, 36 in February, 62 in March, 54 in April, 59 in May, 39 in June, 63 in July, 45 in August, 50 in September, 50 in October, 33 in November and 22 in December. All these murders were committed due to political rivalry, social conflict, land dispute and physical liquidation of class enemies by outlaws.

The sensational murders of the cadres of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) Debu, Chadu, Bulbul and Dhanarjoy who were brushfired

to death at Monirampur upazila on February 4, Manu Shaikha of outlawed BCP of Jhenidah on June 8, convener of Morrelganj upazila unit of BNP Abdur Rashid Khan on June 24, Jubo League leader Azam Ali of Batiaghata upazila on June 28, Khulna city Jubo League leader Hafizur Rahman on July 13, S I Altaf Hossain of Chulakati police camp of Fakirhat upazila on July 17, Jubo League leader Munir Hossain of Sharsha upazila on July 19, Awami League leader and former chairman of Shinghojhuli union parishad (UP) of Chowgacha upazila Ashraf Hossain Asha on July 24, president of Kaliganj upazila unit of Shechhashebak Dal Shalabuddin on July 26, Awami League leader of Jhenidah Sadar upazila Ali Kadar on August 2, S I Elias Ali of Jhenidah police camp on December 24, Khulna Dainik Purbanchal crime reporter Shaikh Harun-or-Rashid on March 2 and Khulna Dainik Anirban crime reporter Shukur Ali on July 5.

## HECTIC DAY...



PHOTOS: STAR

(Left) Supporters of candidates of Magura Municipality election assemble in front of the office of the Returning Officer at Magura Collectorate building during submission of nomination papers. Seven candidates - Khan Monwar Hossain (BNP), Abdul Gafur (Awami League), B M Ershadullah Wahid (Jamaat-e-Islami), Bazlur Rahman Hero (BNP), Faruk Ahmed Babut (BNP), Farukuzzaman (BNP) and Iqbal Akhter Khan Kafur (Independent) - submitted nominations recently for the post of chairman while 81 others filed nominations for nine posts of commissioners and 17 candidates for three posts of female candidates for the municipality election which will be held on January 18 this year after long nine years because of legal complications. (Right) A candidate for the post of chairman of a union parishad (UP) in Moulvibazar submits nomination paper to the Returning Officer at Moulvibazar Sadar Upazila complex. Hundreds of supporters of the candidates thronged the complex on January 1, the last date of submission of nominations.

## UP election

## Polls boycott threat

UNB, Patuakhali

People living in three wards of Bora Baishdia union in Golachipa upazila are going to boycott the coming union parishad (UP) elections demanding a separate union parishad.

With a view to realising their demand, no candidate from ward No 7, 8 and 9 of the union submitted nominations to the Returning Officer for the post of member (general) and female member (reserved) till Wednesday, the last date for submission of nominations.

## 20,000 left out at Boyar Char

UNB, Noakhali

About 20,000 people living at Boyar Char in the Meghna River would not be able to cast votes in the upcoming union parishad (UP) polls, as they were not enrolled in the voters' list.

They urged the authorities concerned to take steps for enlisting them in the voters' list after declaring Boyar Char as a union parishad. Candidates hire those people for

casting fake votes at any election, it is alleged.

Bangladesh Khetmajur Samity held a public meeting here on Friday and demanded enlistment of the Boyar Char inhabitants in the voters' list after declaring the Char a union under Hatiya upazila.

The speakers alleged that the shoal dwellers were deprived of many civic facilities although they made the shoal cultivable and habitable by their hard labour.

## 11 elected unopposed in Bandarban

UNB, Bandarban

Eleven candidates for the posts of general members and seven in the women reserved seats were elected unopposed in the upcoming union parishad (UP) polls in the district.

District election office sources said 157 nominations for chairmen, 863 for general members and 243 for women reserved seats in 28 union parishads were declared valid after scrutiny of the nomination papers.