

Upazila roundup

BHOLA

Biting cold
From Our Correspondent
January 27: Biting cold has been sweeping the district with its fury paralyzing the normal life of the common people.
Witnesses said, the town wears a deserted look as winter chill intensifies after sun-down.
The income of the labourers and rickshawpullers have fallen sharply as they are to keep themselves in doors to escape biting cold, they said.
Besides, the high price of warm clothes which the poor people cannot afford has aggravated their sufferings.

BARISAL

LGBE to build roads, bridges
From Our Correspondent
January 27: Local Government and Engineering Bureau (LGBE) has undertaken a programme to implement two projects - one in Sadar Upazila and the other in Banaripara upazila - of Barisal during the current financial year.
More than Taka 20 lakh has been allocated to implement the projects. These two projects include developments of roads in Sadar Upazila and construction of a bridge in Banaripara upazila.
The works of these projects will be started within a short time and will be completed by March next, it is expected.
Meanwhile, 1125 tubewells will be installed in Barisal district at an expenditure of about Taka 4.50 cr during current financial year.
These tubewells will be installed by Public Health Engineering Department under rural water supply project. Installation works will be started from the next month and will be completed by the end of the current financial year.

12 canals to be re-excavated
12 canals will be re-excavated in the Barisal Poura area under test relief projects programme. According to a Poursava source, the reexcavation works are going on in full swing and will be completed by the end of this month.
To implement the programme 80 metric tons of wheat have been allocated.

RANGAMATI

Indiscriminate killing of guest birds
January 27: Indiscriminate killing of migratory and local birds in forest, lakes and valleys of Chittagong Hill Tracts has been going on despite government ban, reports UNB.
Bird watchers say, guest birds are thronging the places to escape the wintry chill of the northern regions of the world.
According to K M Abu Tahir, the Divisional Forest Officer of the northern Chittagong Hill Tracts forest, about 500 species of winter birds are seen in Bangladesh during this season, of which more than 200 are Siberian migratory birds.
Amateur hunters, professional bird catchers with nets are allegedly killing the birds in Langadu, Bagachhari, Dighinala, Rangbarh, Lama, Alkandam sanctuaries.
Besides, professional catchers make a living during the lean winter season by selling these birds in urban areas at good prices.
Tahir also stressed on preservation of wild life for protecting environment adding that big birds like vultures, cranes, manikjores kill snakes, eat rats and pests and save crops.
He said necessary instructions had been issued to the forest employees to keep constant vigil and prevent hunting of birds.

COMILLA

Seminar on drug abuse
From Our Correspondent
January 27: A seminar on the role of Islam to protect drug abuse was held at Comilla Town Hall under the auspices of Al-Amin Parishad Comilla. Key note paper on the subject was read by Syed Gulam Mohinuddin, Director, Publication of Bangladesh Islamic Foundation, Dhaka while Maulana Fariduddin Masud was the chief guest. Principal Delwar Jahid President of Human Rights was present as chief speaker. The seminar was presided over by Maulana Munir Hossain and addressed by Mr. Ruhul Amin Straj, Mr. Shahjalal Bhuiyan.
The seminar stressed the need for establishing Islamic Values and preventing drug abuse in the society.

FENI

Taka 57 lakh uplift plan
January 27: Local Poursava has sanctioned Taka 57 lakh for 38 uplift schemes during the current fiscal year, officials here said, reports UNB.
Funded by Asian Development Bank, the projects include construction of roads, culverts, mosques, maktabas and primary schools.
The sources added that Taka 28 lakh was sanctioned for 21 projects, Taka 21 lakh for 10 projects and Taka eight lakh for seven projects.

KISHOREGANJ

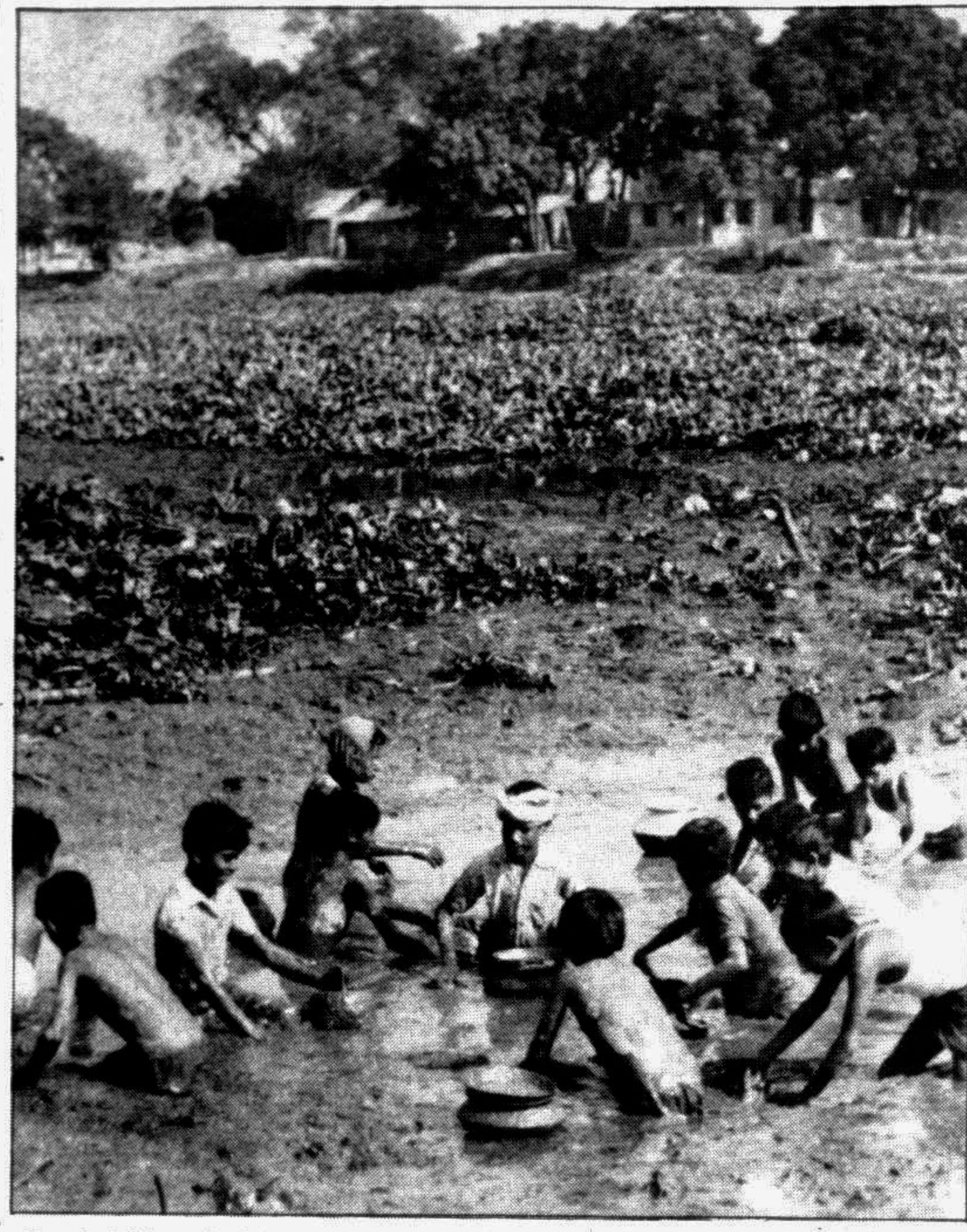
Kidnapped girl rescued
From Our Correspondent
January 27: Jesmin Akhter, a student of class VII, was rescued by police from a house of Bhagalpur village of Bajtipur Upazila here on Thursday. She was kidnapped on January 20 last. Police also arrested the kidnapper Paltu Mia.

Madaripur

Cultivable land shrinks
From Our Correspondent
MADARIPUR, Jan 26: To keep pace with the rising population massive construction of houses has been decreasing the percentage of cultivable land in the four upazilas of the district.
According to sources, population of the district has been doubled during the last couple of years.
Official sources said that this disease medically known as ulcerative syndrome was detected recently in bees, ponds and canals in Sadar, Rajbari, Kalika, and Shibchar upazilas to a large extent.

BANDARBAN

11 smugglers arrested
January 27: Bangladesh Rifles captured 11 smugglers along with illegal goods valued at Tk. 15 lakh, reports UNB.
They were held after a gun battle on January 15.
Police sources here said a BDR patrol party encountered the group of armed smugglers when they entered Bangladesh territory near Chakdaha border outpost from Myanmar area of Burma.
After an hour-long gunfight, BDR rounded up 11 smugglers, ten of whom were said to be Burmese nationals. Others fled across the border, police said.
The arrested smugglers were handed over to the



Rural children find fun and forlic in catching fish from a pumped out pond - Star photo by Mohsin

Kushtia has tourist attraction

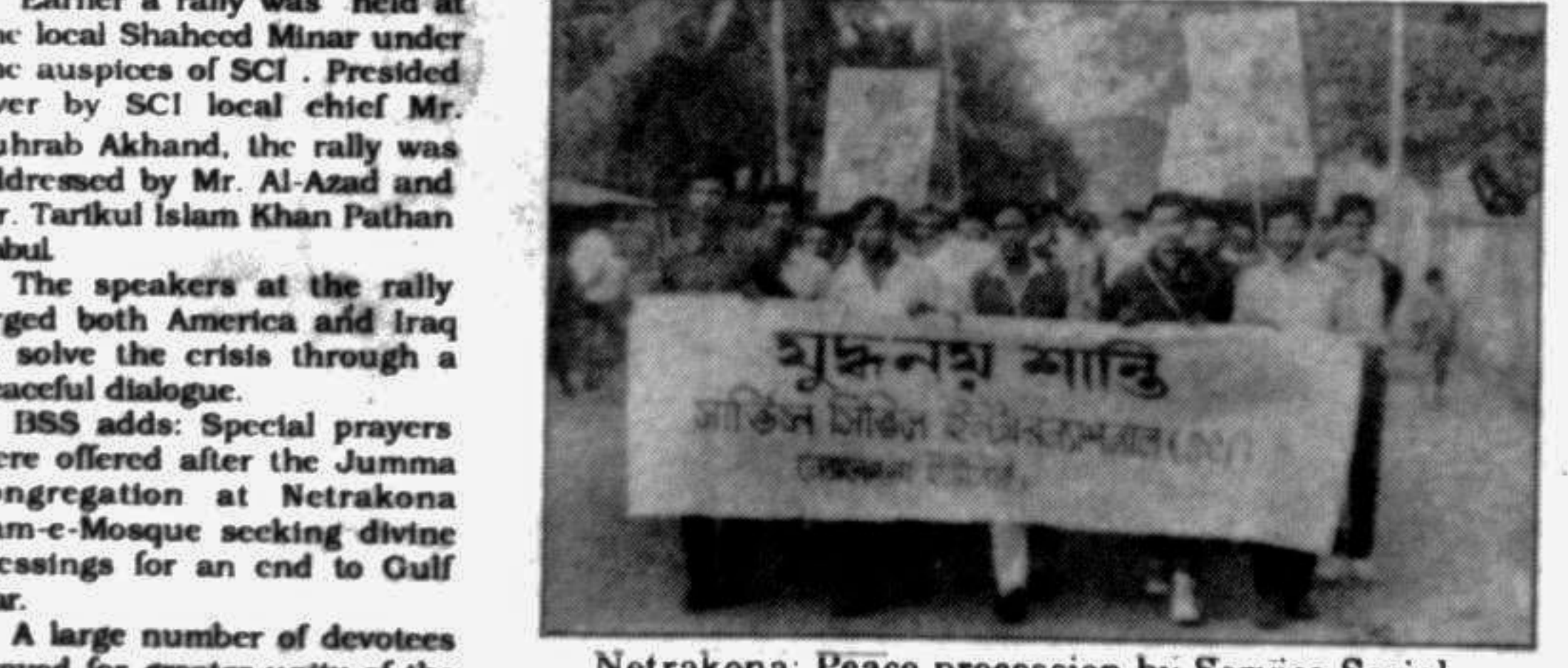
Historical sites need planned development

From Our correspondent
KUSHTIA, Jan 27: Greater Kushtia district has got the potentiality to attract foreign tourists if a perspective plan and necessary facilities are provided to some of the places of historical interests located in different parts of the district.
There are places like Silaidah Kutibari, Laloni Masoulem, Mujib Nagar, Amjhupi Rest House, Jhousdia Mosque and many other places of historical interest spread over the district which may be treated as tourists resorts.
Silaidah Kutibari, residence of the great poet Rabindra Nath Tagore is a palatial building having architectural beauty and ancient heritage. The building has been taken over by Archaeological Department for its preservation and kept it some how to satisfy the tourist. The place is eight miles off Kushtia town across the river Gorai having a good communication at present. Pucca road leading to the Kutibari has been constructed by the Kushtia Zila Parishad at a cost of taka 30 lakh provided by Khulna Divisional Development

Board. There are many souvenirs which date back to the early life of Rabindra-nath who spent most of his busy life here writing a large number of poems including 'Dui Bigha Jami'.
Lalon Masoulem is located at Cheuria one mile off Kushtia town. There are graves of Lalon Shah and his followers. A library has been set up there to preserve the works of Lalon who is regarded as the spiritual leader of the tens of thousands of Bauls who flock together at the annual Lalon's festival being held here for many years. Steps have been taken for research of Lalon Shah's works which reveals that Lalon was not only a great poet but also a great spiritual leader of his time. The great poet Rabindranath Tagore was said to be inspired by the songs of the great Bauls as reflected in many of his poems later on.
Mujib Nagar is located in Meherpur at the extreme border point with India. During Liberation War, the government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh. After the war of liberation Mujib Nagar was given a special status and a function is held every year on April 17 because on this day the government of Bangladesh was formed here in presence of a large number of foreign journalists. To make it known to the people of the world some positive steps are required to be taken to preserve the heritage and thus make the place a tourists resort.
Amjhupi Rest House is an ideal place to attract tourists and it is located at Meherpur. Establishment of this Rest House dates back to the beginning of British rule in this sub-continent. It is said that Lord Clive conspired against Nawab Sirajuddoulla at this place and ultimately won the war against Nawab of Bengal and established the British rule in India. Amjhupi Rest House can be treated and turned into a tourists resort if proper steps are taken in this direction.
Similarly there are more places in this district capable of attracting tourists if these are built up in a planned manner suited to the needs of the time.

Anti-war rallies continue

From Our Correspondent
NETRAKONA, Jan 27: Several hundred volunteers of Services Civil International (SCI), Netrakona unit, brought out a peace procession recently in the district town calling for an immediate end to the gulf war.
The processionists raised slogans "we want peace, not war", "stop war and paraded the main streets of the town."
Earlier a rally was held at the local Shaheed Minar under the auspices of SCI. Presided over by SCI local chief Mr. Suhrib Akhand, the rally was addressed by Mr. Al-Azad and Mr. Tarikul Islam Khan Pathan Babul.
The speakers at the rally urged both America and Iraq to solve the crisis through a peaceful dialogue.
BSS adds: Special prayers were offered after the Jumma congregation at Netrakona Jam-e-Mosque seeking divine blessings for an end to Gulf war.
A large number of devotees prayed for greater unity of the Muslim Ummah, the solution of Palestine problem and for liberation of Baitul Mukaddas from the Israeli occupation.
The prayers were conducted by Imam of Netrakona Jam-e-Mosque Moulana Mohammed Hussain.
Later the devotees brought out an anti-war procession in the town. The processionists raised slogans, "stop war in dialogue", "solve Palestine problem". The procession paraded the main roads of the town.
Our Patuakhali Correspondent adds: A big procession paraded the main roads of Patuakhali chanting slogans, "Saddam you march ahead, we are with you", "Down with US, down with Zionism". The processionists were holding portraits and placards of Saddam and charged the air with "Allah is great", "Naray Takbir".
The processionists demanded withdrawal of US forces from the Gulf and a peaceful solution to the conflict within Arab framework.
Advocate Musharrif Hossain addressed the rally and later handed over a letter of memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner of Patuakhali to convey their concern to the caretaker government in this regard.



Netrakona: Peace procession by Service Social International - Star photo

Pests attack crops in Chandpur

From Our Correspondent
CHANDPUR, Jan 25: Ais and Aman crops on about 20,000 acres of land in Chandpur irrigation project have been attacked by pests locally known as "Panri Poka". As a result crops on a vast track of land are likely to be damaged. The affected areas are Shekdi, Shokdi Rampur, Bashioli, Dhanua, Dechar, Haichar, Bagadi, Chandra under Chandpur and Faridganj upazilas.

Notes from Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent
KISHOREGANJ, Jan 27: Bamboo production in the district is declining rapidly due to lack of proper maintenance, nursing of bamboo clusters and planned plantation programme.
According to the sources, presently about 4000 acres of land are being used for bamboo clusters but for the last 12 years most bamboo clusters in large areas are on the verge of extinction. As a result, prices of bamboo have increased several times causing financial difficulties to small bamboo businessmen.
It is learnt that a pair of bamboo is being sold between Taka 150 and 200. No efforts have yet been taken to increase the bamboo production in the area.
According to the agricultural experts, proper nursing and motivation training of the growers can help increase production rapidly. At least 20 plants can be grown from a cluster instead of two to three per year.
Meanwhile, repair and construction of kutcha houses in the rural areas are being hampered due to scarcity of bamboos, as 80 per cent of houses in the rural areas is kutcha.

Old system of weights, measures
The old system of weights and measures are still being used by a section of traders in different hats and bazars of all 13 upazilas of the district.
According to the eyewitnesses, unscrupulous traders of all the upazilas have been using the old system despite introduction of metric system by the authority. The hawkers and small traders purchase items according to the K.G. system and sell them in old system, cheating the innocent customers. Some small traders are using weights made of stones and bricks.
It is alleged that most shopkeepers preserve K.G. weights as substitute with stones of seers, chhataks ectetra to exploit the customers. Local people stressed the need for inspection of different hats and bazars by mobile court to stop these malpractices.

Potato farming
A scheme has been undertaken to bring about 5,870 acres of land under potato cultivation in 13 upazilas of the district during the current season.
According to Agriculture Extension Department sources, of the total 2,400 acres will be brought under high-yielding variety while 3,470 acres under local variety.
About 23,020 metric tons of potato are expected to be produced under this scheme.
Meanwhile, arrangements are being made to supply seeds, fertilizers, irrigation equipment and the necessary inputs to the growers.

One gets 3 yrs RI for fund embezzlement
From Our Correspondent
KHULNA, Jan 27: The Khulna Divisional Special Judge in a judgement delivered recently found Tarafdar Golam Kibria, Secretary, Sachibunia Union Multipurpose Co-operative Society, guilty and sentenced him to suffer three years R.I. and a fine of Taka 60 thousand and in default to suffer nine months more R.I. in a misappropriating case.
Khulna Co-operative Bank Ltd. sources said, a case was registered with Terokhada UZ magistrate against Tarafdar Golam Kibria for misappropriating Taka 59 thousand and 647.67 from the fund of the said co-operative society.

Sit-in in front of Cox's Bazar Krishi Bank
From Our Correspondent
COX'S BAZAR, Jan 25: All activities of Krishi Bank, Cox's Bazar branch remained suspended on Wednesday following protest and sit-in demonstration by the fishing boat owners' association.
The bank authorities were forced to stop taking tenders for selling 72 Yanmar marine engines imported with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
Cox's Bazar Mechanised Fishing Boat Owners' Association arranged the protest meeting and sit-in demonstration as the bank authorities tried to sell the engines through tender instead of selling them to the fishermen.
The Fishing Boat Owners' Association submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner demanding allotment of the engines among the fishermen who suffered loss in recent tornado.

Political scene

Election camps look like war camps

Star Report
There has been a buying spree of radio and television sets, particularly among the rural people, with the outbreak of Gulf war.
Election camps set up at hats and bazars by different political parties now look like "war camps". Large crowds present in each camp almost throughout the day till late in the evening devote more time to listen to radio and watch television to know about war. The political programmes are less attractive to the people.
In most camps tea is served free of cost with cheap brand of cigarettes to the waiting people.

Our Kushtia Correspondent writes: With the withdrawal of 16 candidates in four constituencies of Kushtia district in the ensuing Parliamentary election to be held on February 27, there remain 41 candidates in the race.
In Constituency No. 1, the candidates are Nur Kutubul Alam (Jamaat), Hafizur Rahman Khaza (Janata Party), Advocate Shamsul Alam Dudu (BKSAL), Kazi Aref Ahmed (JSD-Inu), A.K.M. Sarwar Jahan Badsha (A.L.), Md. Yakub Ali (JSD-Rab), Zahedul Islam (Independent), Abu Bakkar (Freedom Party), Korban Ali (Jatiya Party) and Ahsanul Huq Mollah (BNP).
In Constituency No. 2 the candidates are Ahsan Habib Lincon (Jatiya Party), Prof Abdul Jabbar (Jana Sakti Party), Md. Saderul Biswas (Zaker Party), Md. Abdul Wahed (Jamaat), Abdur Rouf Choudhury (BNP), Marfat Ali (JSD-Rab), Marfat Ali Master (JSD-Siraj), Hasnul Huq Inu (JSD-Inu), Shaiful Islam Kubbat (Awami League) and Sakawat Ibne Moyn Choudhury (CPB).
In Constituency No. 3 the candidates are: Dr. Anisur Rahman (Jamaat), A.K.M. Masud (JAGPA), Rafiqul Khan Khokan (Zaker Party), Nur Ahmed Bakul (UCL), Saidur Rahman Tapan (JSD-Siraj), Barrister Amirul Islam (Independent), Md. Anwar Ali (Awami League), S.M. Azizul Huq (Jatiya Party), Alhaj A.K.M. Abdul Khaleq Chantu (BNP), Munshi Wasmuddin (Chashi Dal), and Prof. Sirajul Islam (Islami Otkya Jote).
In Constituency No. 4 the candidates are: Nur Alam Ziku (JSD-Rab), Syed Mehedi Ahmed Rumi (BNP), Md. Farhad Hossain (Jamaat), Alhaj Faizuddin (Zaker Party), Kiamuddin (Islami Otkya Jote), Md. Shahidul Islam (Jatiya Party), Abdul Mannan Khan (BKSAL), Abdul Awal Mia (Awami League), Advocate Amirul Islam (Muslim League), and Mostafa Shamsuzzaman (Independent).

Kurigram
A Correspondent from Kurigram adds: The election campaign in Kurigram district has reached its peak just after allocation of symbol. The candidates are now visiting their respective constituencies to mobilise support in their favour. The supporters of candidates in their efforts to popularise the election symbols of their respective candidates are bringing out processions and making door to door campaign.
There are in all 43 candidates for 4 parliament seats in Kurigram district.
The constituency-wise names of candidates are given below:
JS 25: Kurigram-1, comprising Bhurungamari, Nageswari Upazilas: Kafilur Rahman Bepari, Principal Kamur Uddin, Md. Abdul Hal, Khairul Alam, Abdus Sobur Chowdhury, A K M Shahidul Islam, Zahedul Haque, Fazlul Haque.
JS-26: Kurigram-2, comprising Kurigram Sadar, Rajarhat and Fulbari Upazilas: Motlubar Rahman Shaif, Moulana ANM Solaiman, Harun-or-Rashid Lal, Abdus Salam, Zafar Ali, Sayeda Gulruh Mohal Sirajee, Advocate Karom Ali, A K M Samsujjoha Ratan, Alhaj Tajul Islam, Advocate Zakaria, Subrangshu Chakraborty, Ansar Ali, and Khaja Golam Marshed Pintoo, the lone Independent candidate for Kurigram-2 seat.
JS 27: Kurigram-3, comprising Ulipur Upazila: Lutfar Rahman Sarker, Moulana Abdul Kuddus, Mohiul Islam Hokkani, Amjad Hossain Talukder, Sowendra Prasad Pandey, Aminul Islam, Matiar Rahman, Golam Mostafa and Independent candidates Abdul Jalil Sarker, ex-Minister A K M Mayedul Islam.
JS 28: Kurigram-4, comprising Chilmari, Rowmari and Rajibpur Upazilas: Nurul Islam Sarker, Principal Serajul Haque, Golam Haider, Azizur Rahman, Atzul Haque Master, Sadakat Hossain, A B M Moinul Islam, Amjad Hossain, Alhaj Golam Hossain, Anwar Hossain, Nurul Alam, Abul Kashem.
Earlier, 16 out of total 59 candidates withdrew their candidature from four seats in Kurigram district on the last date of withdrawal. The constituency-wise break up of candidates withdrawn is:
Kurigram-1, three out of eleven, Kurigram-2, three out of sixteen, Kurigram-3, five out of fifteen and Kurigram-4, five out of seventeen candidates. Those who withdrew their candidature are: Kurigram-1: Majibar Rahman (AL), Anarul Huq (Freedom Party) and Alauddin (Independent).
Kurigram-2: Neaz Nazmul (BKSAL), Rukunodowla (JP), and Habibur Rahman (BSD-Mahboob).
Kurigram-3: Swapan Kumar Sarker (CPB), Fulu Sarker (AL), Aktarul Karim (AL), A K M Ziaul Islam (Ind.) and Liaquat Ali Sarker (Ind.).
Kurigram-4: Advocate Feroj Feroz (Conotantri Party), Abdus Sobur (BKSAL), Abdal Khaleque (BSD), Odud Hossain (AL) and Ruhul Amin(Ind).

Netrakona
BSS from Netrakona adds: The pro-Awami League Chhatra League (H-A) Thursday held a rally at Netrakona Government College premises demanding immediate release of valiant freedom fighter Abdul Kader Siddiqui.
The rally was presided over by Mr. Rezaul Karim Ripon, President of Netrakona unit of BCL (H-A).
The speakers urged the government to release Kader Siddiqui and try the killers of Bangladesh Sheekh Mujibur Rahman.
Joypurhat
UNB Form Joypurhat adds: Acting Amcer of Jammait-Islami Abbas All Khan on Thursday hailed as "timely" the government move introducing a code of conduct for the coming parliamentary election.
Addressing two public meetings at Madhahnagar and Choumahali Bazar in the district, Khan called upon all political parties and groups to accept a common code of conduct in the interest of free and fair polls.
The Jamaat leader reiterated if voted to power, his party would establish Islamic law in the state.
In another public meeting at Boalmari in Pabna district, Jamaat Secretary General Matur Rahman Nizami called upon the people to elect honest, competent and God-fearing candidates in the February 27 election.
Zia's birth anniversary
BSS from Mymensingh adds: The birth anniversary of the late President Ziaur Rahman was observed here under the auspices of BNP, Mymensingh town branch.
In this connection a public meeting was held in the Durgabari road under the presidency of Professor Shaful Islam. Mr. A.K.M. Fazlul Haque, Professor Tofazul Hussain Chowdhury, Mr. M.A. Halim Suruj, Nazrul Islam Bhuiyan, Professor Sk. Amjad Ali, Mr. Sujauddin and Mr. Wahab Akhand spoke on the occasion.
3 newsmen to contest from Barisal
BSS from Barisal adds: Three journalists of Barisal district will contest forthcoming parliamentary elections on tickets from different political parties.
Mr. Mustafizur Rahman, Editor of the Daily Prabashi of Barisal, has submitted his candidature as a nominee of the Bangladesh Zaker Party (BZP) for Jhalakati-Nalchity constituency.
Mr. M.A. Mattin, Editor of the Daily Dakkhanchal of Barisal, has submitted his nomination on ticket from Islam' Otkya Jote for the constituency including Dhandaria and Kowkhali area.
Mr. Sudhir Sen, an elderly journalist of the Daily Bangla from Barisal and President of the Barisal unit of Bangladesh Sangbadik Samity, will contest on behalf of Bramik Krishak Samajbadi Dal (SKSD) from the constituency which covers Barisal Sadar upazila.
Khulna ML
A report from Khulna adds: Khulna unit of Bangladesh Muslim League held a discussion on Tuesday at its office to mark the ninth death anniversary of Muslim League leader Khan A Sabur.