

## National



SIRAJGANJ: Production target of aman paddy could not be achieved in the district due to continuous drought. The photo shows the farmers of Tarash thana carrying home paddy. They were happy with whatever they could take home.

— Star photos

## Renewed clashes feared in Barisal as *lathials* prepare to claim paddy in charland

From Staff Correspondent

**BARISAL**, Dec 9: Renewed bloody armed clashes are feared in Chhaguria of Mehendiganj thana of Barisal as the *jotdars*-backed armed *lathials* and the local farmers still confront each other.

Meanwhile, about three hundred *lathials* with arms from Bhola and a magistrate with police force from Bagerhat police camp tried to reap the paddy of Chhaguria but their attempt was foiled as they were resisted by the local villagers and farmers. During the clash 20 to 30 gunshots were exchanged among the farmers, the armed *lathials* and police.

The situation has further deteriorated allegedly follow-

ing a declaration of the local government authority that the paddy of that char area will be sold on auction as this charland is a *khasland* and naturally owned by the government.

On the other hand, according to farmers, as land revenue taxes are being paid by them so this land cannot be leased out further and the crops cannot be sold in auction. This has been recorded duly, the farmers said. However, the TNO of Mehendiganj ignored all these.

As a result farmers are in a dilemma — first, attack from the armed *lathials* of Bhola and seconds, TNO's declaration. Farmers in the meantime, are guarding their crops in the

char area round the clock. Meanwhile, 40 police and two magistrates were deputed at the Chatkimala police camp in between Barisal and Bhola districts border line.

In this situation decisions from district administrations are yet to come.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner of Barisal, Abdul Quddus said, decision will be taken according to law. Meanwhile, police force and magistrates have already been sent in the troubled area to normalise the situation.

Divisional Commissioner M A Rashid said, necessary instructions have already been given to the district adminis-

tration to tackle any situation. Law and order situation must be maintained at any cost — he added.

Besides, eleven police camps were set up in different char areas of Patuakhali while a list of 160 spotted *lathials* has been prepared also from the Patuakhali district. All district authorities should take this sort of endeavour, sources said. They also said that district administration should take decision about the ownership of paddy in the disputed char area to avert clashes. On Saturday last a group of armed *lathials* swooped on the farmers at Jalirchar of Mehendiganj leaving seven injured.

### AIDS awareness week

## Preventive measures should be taken at all levels of society

From Staff Correspondent

**SYLHET**, Dec 9: Controlled sexual behaviour should be followed and following of religious activities can save the people from the clutches of the killer disease like AIDS, since there is no treatment of the disease. It was stated at different discussion meetings, seminars arranged in observance of the World AIDS Day here recently.

A discussion meeting was held at the Sylhet M A G Osmany Medical College with Professor Golam Kibria, Principal of the college in the chair. Professor Nazim Uddin Ahmed, Professor of Pharmacology attended the function as chief guest. He said that, since there is no treatment of the disease, preventive measures be taken at different levels of the society. The people should be educated on sexual behaviour, he said, adding, the people engaged with the medical profession should come forward.

The discussion meeting was addressed among others by Professor Nurunnahar, Dr Nasiruddin Mollah, Dr A K M Sharif Islam, Dr Abdus Sabur and Dr Shabbir Ahmed.

In his presidential speech, Professor Golam Kibria said an AIDS detecting centre in the Sylhet M A G Osmany Medical College has been functioning satisfactorily urging the people to take the facility of the laboratory in suspected cases. Investigation chances are free of cost, he added.

The weeklong programme styled as 'AIDS Awareness Week' organised by the Health Department was also observed here through different programmes like discussion meetings, seminars, rallies, posterings, cultural functions and others.

The Cyclone Group, a local welfare organisation organised

Samad Bachchu, Mukta Begum, Indrani Sen and Syed Nuruzzaman.

Children, juvenile and youth organisation 'Renessa' arranged another seminar. Few more organisations also held discussion meetings in observance of the week and World AIDS Day.

Another report says: A dis-

attended as chief guest.

Professor Afjal Chowdhury, Advocate Azizul Malik Chowdhury, Aftab Chowdhury, Dr Shaminur Rahman, district BMA secretary and Mastafa Allama, Dr Shahriar Hossain Chowdhury was the main speaker.

The speakers stressed on the need for creating social awareness about the killer disease.

A social revolution should be launched in the country where drug addiction had crossed extreme point, they said. The speaker also said, otherwise, the future generation would face a great disaster.

Our Staff Correspondent from Barisal adds: To observe the 'World AIDS Day' a weeklong programme November 25 concluded here at the Barisal town, a divisional headquarters. The programmes were organised by the AIDS information and awareness publicity committee formed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The weeklong programmes included rally, milking in the streets, poster distribution of stickers, sticking posters, distribution of leaflets among the common people in and around the town areas.

The two-day long programmes also included 'Jirigan' in front of Aswini Kumar Hall. Slogans about the AIDS awareness.

Another report says: A discussion meeting styled 'killer disease AIDS', Dr Abdurrahman Al Kafi spoke on the occasion as guest while Haran Kanti Sen presided. The discussion meeting was also addressed among others by Md Khaleduzzaman, Selim Awan, Moaj Afas, Iqbal Bahar Sohel, Shafiqur Rahman Shahjahan, Abdus Sadeque Iqbal, Abdus

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SYLHET: The Deputy Commissioner of the district, Abu Taher Khan speaking as chief guest at a seminar recently on prevention from AIDS and drugs, arranged by the International Language Academy. To create awareness (R) against the killer disease, AIDS a rally was brought out which paraded the main streets of the Sylhet town recently.

## Liberation War: Jhalakathi freed on Dec 9

### They faced strong resistance

From Aroop Talukdar

**The guava garden was destroyed by felling almost all the guava trees. This drive was conducted by the madrasa students of Sarshina, Rajakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams members of different units of Jhalakathi. During that clearing drive hundreds of Pak army-backed supporters let loose a reign of terror killing at least ten thousand innocent people in the area.**

December 9: Jhalakathi, the then sub-divisional headquarters (now district headquarters) was free from Pak army atrocities until April 25, 1971. By 26th of April almost all of the greater Barisal district was captured by the Pakistani military. And from that time onward they continued killing, looting, raping and setting fire to houses till their escape on December 8 and 9, '71. On December 9, '71, Jhalakathi was finally liberated and the Freedom Fighters had their grip on Jhalakathi.

On April 26 Freedom Fighters went out of the town and took shelter in villages — some of them went to India for guerrilla training. The worst time was from May to July when Pak army, Razakar, Al-Shams and Al-Badr atrocities went unabated in the Jhalakathi town and its adjoining areas.

In late July, Sarbahara Party chief Comrade Siraj Sikdar took shelter with his party members at Jhalakathi and Swarupkathi border area of Atghar Kuriana.

There, Siraj Sikdar formed his troops with Sattar, Faruk, Selim Sahanewaz, Mujibul Haq, Mehedi, Selim and many others. A small group of Freedom Fighters was active at Nalchity under the leadership of Syed Nazrul Islam Sahid. Another group with Akkel Ali, Abdus Sattar of Karmakathi and Commander Abdul Haq was also active there.

The enemy attacked the Nalchity thana. But in an odd encounter Freedom Fighters had to retreat and at one stage Akkel Ali was killed and Abdul Hossain seriously injured and caught by the Pak army. Later he was sent to Jessore Cantonment. After three months he was released and came back to Barisal. But on October 27 he was again caught by the Razakars who took him to the Kirtonkhola river bank and shot him dead.

On May 3 Pakistani army attacked Kirtipasha. Siraj Sikdar on that day shifted his camp from Kirtipasha and set up a small unit camps at Madra, Satajesh, Kathi, Ata and Vimpur villages.

In May, about 50 Pak army with a launch went to Madra where they faced strong resistance by the Sarbahara Party men under the leadership of Sattar and Faruk. After a heavy fighting the Pak army unit fled leaving one of them seriously injured. That ill-fated Pak army personnel was crucified with bamboos to be shown amid the local people.

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NARSINGDI, Dec 9: A notorious dacoit who wanted to lead an innocent life after giving up dacoity could not save himself from the hands of his former accomplices, says UNB.

According to villagers, Shafuddin, 35, son of Giasuddin Mollah of village Hatubhangi in Raipura thana was engaged in dacoity for a long time. Five cases were lodged against him.

But since last one month he gave up robbery and started saying prayers. A few days back he erected a prayer place near the Hatubhangi railway station and started passing the nights through its 23 branches in the district during the fiscal year 1994-95, according to an official source.

The source disclosed that an amount of Tk 5 crore 32 lakh and 45 thousand has so far been lent. Of this amount Tk 4 crore 41 lakh and 23 thousand as crop loan and Tk 91 lakh and 22 thousand as term loan. Crop loan includes loan for cultivation of aman paddy, boro paddy, wheat, potato, ground-nut and vegetables. Term loan is meant

for purchasing cattle-head. The source also said that a satisfactory trend for taking and repaying loan is marked among the farmers. Up to this time Tk 13 crore 54 lakh has been realised of the loans this year as against Tk 3 crore 11 lakh and 84 thousand this time last year. Last year an amount of only Tk 2 crore 38 lakh and 40 thousand was distributed which is about half the money distributed this year up to this time.

When asked the source also said all the affairs of distribution and realisation of loan are supervised by 66 field workers working under 23 branches of BKB in the district.

Subedar Mujibul Haq, Rashid Mollah and many others. The fighting continued from noon until evening. With the night fall some Pak army retreated and took shelter in a half-burnt house in fear. They were later found and killed. In the darkness many of them were also killed while trying to cross a canal.

After the 'battle of Chachair' Pak army troops did not conduct operation during night time in fear. So the nights were for Freedom Fighters.

The 'Chachair' battle according to the people of Jhalakathi, was a milestone during the war of liberation. In that battle the nation lost a valiant Freedom Fighter Md Awal of Kathipara village under Nalchity thana.



JHALAKATHI: The memorial plaque of 'Chachair Battle' of 1971 was unveiled by Halima Begum, mother of Shaheed Md Awal on December 14, 1993.

— Star photo

## Law, order situation in Natore deteriorates

**NATORE, Dec 9: Crimes are on rise in the district deteriorating law and order situation in the district day by day, reports UNB.**

According to witnesses, the clash erupted while a group equipped with lethal weapons attacked the rival people who were fishing in a shrimp enclosure.

The injured Kenaram Das, Haridasi, Haran Dhal, Sarala and Khuku were rushed to the Sakhipur Hospital.

A case was filed with the police.

**He wanted to lead an innocent life**

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NATORE, Dec 9: A housewife was allegedly killed by their driver at Mirpara of the town on Monday night, police said, reports UNB.

The victim Selina Banu, 35, was the wife of businessman Mosharrif Hossain.

According to neighbours, the driver Shahjahan Ali Babu, 30, came to handover the key of their micro-bus at about 12.30 am to Selina, he suddenly entered her room, hit her with a jack on her head and fled away. Husband of the victim was not at home at that time.

Later, on information, police rushed to the spot, found Selina lying unconscious on the floor and sent her to Natore Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

She was later shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where she succumbed. Police arrested the driver.

The reason behind the murder could not be known immediately.