

## National

## News snaps

## KCC ward commissioner joins AL

KHULNA, Dec 30: A ward commissioner of Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Ershad Ali Sikder joined Awami League (AL) at a simple ceremony at the Khulna Circuit House on Friday last along with his supporters, reports BSS.

Awami League leaders including Monnujan Sufian MP, president of Khulna district Awami League and former whip of Jatiyo Sangsad Sheikh Harun Rashid and secretary of the district Awami League SM Mostafa Rashid Shuja MP and whip of Jatiyo Sangsad, president and secretary of Khulna City Awami League advocates Monjurul Imnam and Talukder Abdul Khaleque, State Minister for Relief and Disaster Management were present on the occasion.

## Massive Rabi crop farming scheme

CHUADANGA, Dec 30: The cultivation of Rabi crop of the current Rabi season is now in full swing in all the four thanas of Chuadanga district, reports BSS.

The four thanas of the district are Chuadanga sadar, Almora, Damurhuda and Jibannagar. According to an official source, in the current Rabi crop cultivation season, the cultivation target of wheat has been fixed at 23,000 hectares, potato 900 hectares, sweet potato at 130 hectares, maize at 100 hectares, moush at 16,000 hectares, gram at 14,000 hectares, mohor at 100 hectares, arhar at 100 hectares and Kheshari at 1200 hectares. About 80 per cent of the total target of cultivation of the Rabi crops have been completed and by 15th of the next month the cultivation period will be over.

## Reception to intellectuals

SITAKUNDA, Dec 30: State Minister for relief and Disaster Management Talukder Abdul Khaleque has said the nation can get proper direction from the intellectuals in times of need, reports BSS.

The State Minister was addressing a reception to the intellectuals as chief guest at Shamsul Huda High School premises on Monday. The reception was organised by local Muradpur Club on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee.

Presided over by president of the celebrating committee SM Nurunabi, the function was addressed, among others, by Abul Kashem Master MP, TNO Saifullah Laskar and Dr Faisal Siddiqi. The minister called upon the intellectuals to play an active role in building the exploitation-free Sonar Bangla as dreamt by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He also lauded the role of the club in the development of education, health care, cultural and socio-economic condition of the region, said an official handout.

## Alleged rapist arrested

SYLHET, Dec 30: A man was arrested and sent to jail custody for deflowering a minor girl at a village in Golapganj thana in the district, reports BSS.

Police said Abdul Malek Bulu dragged his sister-in-law Rupi Begum, 10, daughter of late Samir Uddin of Barakut village in the thana to a nearby tilla and raped her on Thursday. The ill-fated girl was returning home after shopping at the local bazar. Later, people from the nearby area rushed to the spot at the cry of the victim and rescued her in a serious condition as she was bleeding profusely. She was rushed to local hospital.

## 11 uplift projects implemented

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 30: The Water Development Board (WDB) has implemented 11 development projects in the district at an allocation of about Taka 1.1 crore in 1995-96 and 1996-97 fiscal years, reports BSS.

According to an official source the projects include construction and reconstruction of flood control barrage, culverts, dredging of rivers and earth work. About 159 metric tons of wheat was also allocated for the earth work.

## Agri inputs to be supplied among farmers

MADRIPUR, Dec 30: A total of 75,000 hectares of land in the district will be brought under paddy, wheat and other winter crops cultivation during the current season, reports BSS.

According to an official source the projects include construction and reconstruction of flood control barrage, culverts, dredging of rivers and earth work. About 159 metric tons of wheat was also allocated for the earth work.

## Seminar on human rights

KURGRAM, Dec 30: A seminar on "Human Rights in flourishment of democracy" was held here at the local office of Bangladesh Human Rights Commission recently, reports BSS.

Organised by the district unit Human Rights Commission, the seminar was presided over by president of the commission and journalist Mujibur Rahman. General Secretary of the Commission Prof Liakat Ali presented the key-note paper in the seminar which was held to mark the 49th anniversary of World Human Rights Day. The speakers called upon the elite of the society to help create mass awareness about human rights. They also urged to repeal the law which negates the human rights for flourishment of democracy. The speakers said terrorism must be rooted out from the society to give democracy an institutional shape.

## Discussion on life, works of Kashempuri

NETRAKONA Dec 30: The 18th death anniversary of noted folk literature Sirajuddin Kashempuri was observed here recently in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

Sirajuddin Kashempuri was born in village Kashempuri of Madaripur union under Netrakona thana in 1901. He was given literary award by Bangla Academy in 1976 for writing many books on folk-literature. Netrakona reporters Club arranged a discussion on the life and works of Sirajuddin Kashempuri at the conference room of old circuit house. Octogenarian educationist and litterateur Prof Shamsuddin Ahmed was the chief guest while advisor of Reporters Club, Netrakona, advocate Hafizur Rahman Khan presided.

## Firewoods being used in brickfields

PABNA, Dec 30: Firewoods are on rampant use in the brickfields of the district despite the government ban, reports BSS.

The government imposed the ban on the use of firewood at the furnaces of the brickfields to maintain the ecological balance. There are more than 100 brickfields in different parts of the district and firewoods are being used indiscriminately before the nose of the district administration. Some brickfield owners informed that they use firewoods as those are available at cheaper rate and on credit. They also said the price of coal is higher than the firewood. While contacted, a source of district administration told that mobile vigilance teams have been formed to find out the brickfield owners engaged in violating the government order.

## Work of 5 bridges completed

MANIKGANJ, Dec 30: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) completed the construction work of five bridges at a cost of Taka 2,03,43,000 under PL-480 in the district recently, reports BSS.

The constructed bridges are 35-metre long bridge on Maniknagar-Joymontop road and 60-metre long bridge on Daragram-Bonparil road in Singair thana, a 30-metre long bridge on Mohadebpur-Gangashagar road in Shibalay thana. A 43.90-metre long bridge on Jhikra Poddarbari-Mohadebpur road in Harirampur thana and a 63-metre long bridge on the old Dhaleswari river in Gheor thana. The communication system of the areas have improved much after the completion of these bridges.

## Illegal sale of rectified spirit

BARGUNA, Dec 30: Illegal sale of rectified spirit at different places of the district is going on unabated before the nose of the law enforcing agencies, reports BSS.

As per rules, the government provides licence to the bonafide homeopath practitioners and druggists to use the spirit in manufacturing medicine. But it is learnt that some licence holders are illegally selling the item to the liquor shops for manufacturing spurious wine. Moreover, the contrabands including Indian Phenisidyl Syrup and other spurious drugs are being sold at different medicine shops in the district. Besides, opium and ganja mixed bidi are also available at different betel-leaf and grocery shops in the district. The guardians demanded immediate measures to stop illegal selling of the rectified spirit and the spurious drugs to save the youths, in particular, from ruination.

## Workshop on modern methods of farming

JHALAKATI, Dec 30: A day-long workshop on modern methods of cultivation was held at the Rajapur thana head-quarters on Sunday, reports BSS.

Organised by the Agriculture Extension Department, the workshop made a brief review on harvesting of various crops at the demonstration plots under the Agriculture Support Service Programme, employment of the destitute women in cultivation, progress of rabi cultivation and coordinated block demonstration. It also suggested necessary recommendations for boosting up agri-production in the district. Some 25 agro-officials and block supervisors of the AED took part in the workshop.

## They never exercise voting rights

JHENIDAH, Dec 30: All the 2,860 women voters, in maintaining their age-old superstition, did not exercise their right to franchise in the elections held at Shurat Union held on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The female voters both Hindu and Muslim communities never exercise their voting rights since Pakistan period, said a village elder.

All the efforts of district administration, NGO and women organisations went in vain to bring them to polling centres. Even member candidates for women reserve seats did not cast their votes.

A female voter said the male guardians do not allow them to cast their votes. A male guardian and village elder said it is a social custom not to cast vote by the female voters adding that it is anti-religion to touch the hands of women for smear indelible ink by unknown people while casting votes.

On the other hand, it is learnt that 87 per cent female voters of nearby Kalicharanpur and Naldanga Unions cast their votes in the elections held on the same day.

Local UP Chairman Abdur Rashid said there is a risk of social boycott if any one tries to bring female voters to polling centres.

## Cold wave claims 11 lives in Panchagarh

PANCHAGARH, Dec 30: The severe cold wave claimed at least 11 lives in the district last fortnight, local people and hospital sources said, reports UNB.

The deaths were reported from the municipality area here and different villages of Sadar, Atwari, Tetulia and Boda thanas.

The victims were identified as Gora Mohammad, Mohammad Bohur Uddin, Jharu Mohammad, Hafez, Sukur Ali, Mofiz Uddin, Abul Hossain, Shohimuddin, Mohammad Jhoru, Shanu and Hamuddin.

The district administration has started distribution of warm clothes among the cold hit poor people in some areas. But the affected people alleged maldistribution of the clothes by a section of officials.

Normal life is being paralysed in the district due to dense fog and shivering cold. During the last two days, the mercury has registered a slight rise.

## Silver crown looted from temple

KHAGRACHARI, Dec 30: A gang of armed robbers looted Tk 46,500 cash and silver crown from a temple in Matiranga thana, police said, reports BSS.

According to a delayed report, a gang of 15-16 dacoits entered the Taliapang Buddhist Temple in the thana breaking the window while its custodian went out to respond to the call of nature at dead of night on December 21.

They also inflicted injuries to eight Marma tribals who were sleeping in the temple. A case was filed with the police accusing 16 people.

## Arms recovered

MADRIPUR, Dec 30: Madaripur thana police, acting on a tip-off recovered two pipe guns from Rasti village and Kulpadi area recently, reports BSS.

Police said, a case was filed with Madaripur thana in this connection.

## Harvesting of cotton begins

CHUADANGA, Dec 30: The harvesting of cotton in the Chuadanga zone of Bangladesh Cotton Development Board (BCDB) has begun last week, reports BSS.

According to BCDB, 11,000 hectares were brought under cotton cultivation in this zone.

About 3.35 lakh maunds of cotton is expected to be produced in this zone this year. The harvesting of cotton will be completed by March next.

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## Illegal sale of rectified spirit

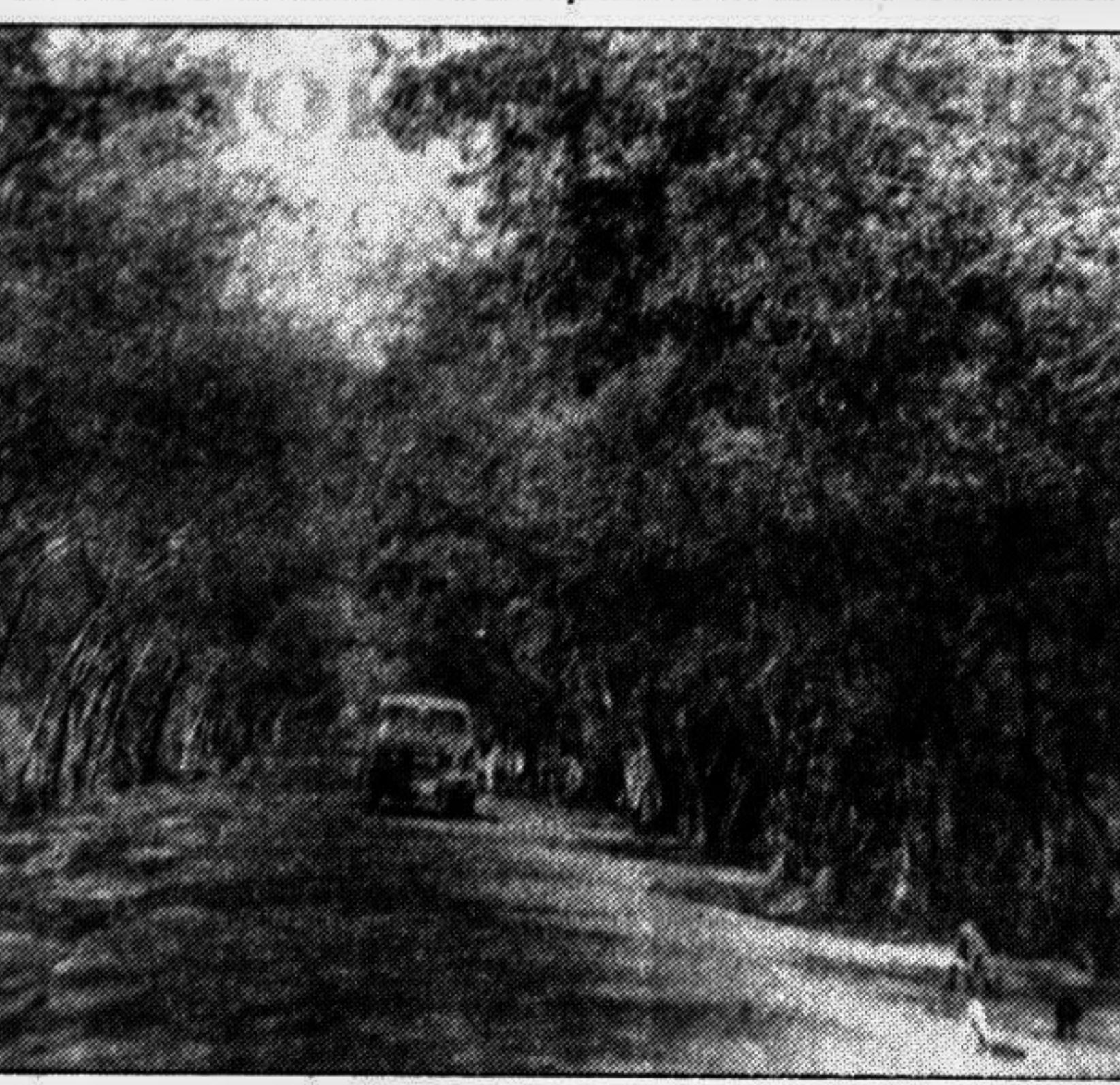
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KHULNA: Social afforestation drive has become a complete success in the port city.

— Star photo

## Voting in 1 centre suspended in Gaibandha

## 75 injured in post-polls violence in Sherpur

From Our Correspondent

SHERPUR, Dec 30: At least 75 persons were injured in electoral violence during the last two days (19th and 20th) of on-going union parishad elections.

Polling at least 11 centres has been suspended due to violence while clashes between the supporters of rival candidates took place, two separate fire incidents also occurred according to district administration source.

Elections were peacefully held at 120 centres out of 131 under five thanas of the district. 50 persons were injured in Dhala and Kamaria unions on December 27. Of the injured, 15 persons were admitted in sadar hospital and rest 40 people were released after first aid treatment. Other 25 person were injured on December 28 in Bajitkhila and Charsharpur union. Of them, 5 persons were admitted in sadar hospital.

The Deputy Commissioner, Sherpur, told The Daily Star, polling in 11 centres were cancelled as supporters of certain chairman and member candidates snatched away ballot boxes.

Mohammad Naofel Miah DC Sherpur said, out of 52 unions in five thanas of the district election in 41 unions completed peacefully.

District election officials and election control room sources said that the postponed centres are: Sannasirchar Government Primary School centre (Kamarerchar union), Kuhukanda Digpara Non-government Primary School centre and Chandernagar Nayapara Government Primary School centre in Dhala union, Khunua Government Primary School centre and Ragunatpur Tajul Islam Dkhil Madrasa Centre in Kamarai union.

In Char Sherpur union six centres are Charsharpur Government Primary School centre, Shattanipara Government Primary School centre, Charsharpur Nayapara Government Primary School centre, Heruya Balurghat Government Primary School centre, Ziganibag Non-government Primary School centre, and Bamunerchar Government Primary School centre.

Supporters of a defeated chairman candidate of Charsharpur union ransacked the TNO office in sadar thana of the district. Several hundred supporters of Mukhsur Rahman gheraoed the TNO office on December 28. Later the agitated supporters of Mukhsur Rahman brought out of protest rally which paraded the town streets chanting slogan against the result of Charsharpur union. They demanded repolling at KMI Senior Madrasa including cancellation of poll result where election was held on December 23.

Besides, tense situation has been prevailing in Bajitkhila and Charsharpur union. Police said, supporters of defeated chairman candidates attacked each other at Bajitkhila.

However, polling in all the

eight unions concluded peacefully. Polling in Gobindaganj sadar union remain stopped following injunction issued by the courts.

Our Sathkhira Correspondent reports: A total of 52 Union Parishad Chairman were officially declared elected under five thanas of Sathkhira district.

The elections of 52 Union Parishads (UPs) concluded in five out of seven thanas of the district in a peaceful manner. These thanas are Shyamnagar, Kaliganj, Debhabata, Sathkhira Sadar and Assasunni.

The district election office, after holding election in the union parishads declared unofficial results of chairman and members who were elected in the polls.

The elected chairman under five thanas are: in Shyamnagar thana—Jagilal Haider (Shyamnagar sadar), Abdul Hamid (Kashimari), Liakat Hossain (Bhurulia), Golam Alamgir (Nur Nagar), Abdul Kader (Atulia), Amal Krishna Sardar (Padma Pukur), Likat Hossain (Barigolani), Gazi Sobhr Hossain (Gabura), Asim Kumar Mridha (Munshiganj), Sk Alamgir Haider (Ramjan Nagar).

In Kaliganj thana—Abdus Sattar (Krishan Nagar), Mizanur Rahman (Bishnupur), Abdul Khaled (Bhara Shimla), Kazi Mofakharul Haq, Nilu (Kushlia), Md Selim (Nalta), Abdul Haq (Mathureshpur), Khorsheed Alam (Dhalbaria), Abdul Wahed (Rotopur), Shahjahan Siraj (Moutala) and Daridur Haq (South Sreepur) were declared elected.

In Debhabata thana—Asadul Haq (Kulia), Golam Farooq Babu (Parulia), Salamatullah (Sakhipur), Abdul Haider (Rupi), Md Selim (Fingri), Abdul Gafoor (Brahmarupur), Ashraf Hossain (Dhulbaria), Shahiduzzaman Helal (Banshbandha), Golam Sarowar (Bai Kari), Lutfur Rahman (Agerdari), Abdul Mazid (Shibpur), Azmaluddin (Jawhdanga), Mahitul Haq (Balli), Abdul Alim (Labsa) Golam Morshed (Kushkhali) and Fazlur Rahman (Ghona) were elected.

In Assasunni thana—Noor Mohammad (Sreecula), Matur Rahman (Pratapnagar), Abdul Hossain (Budhata), Kanak Chandra Mondal (Kadakati), Ismail Hossain (Dargapur), Gazi Abdur Rouf (Barital), Shahidul Islam (Shovnali), Mobarak Ali (Khajra), Rafiqul Islam (Kulla) and Nurul Alam (Anulia) were elected.

Our Moulvibazar correspondent says: Elections in 64 union parishads under six thanas of Moulvibazar district were held peacefully, according to district election control room source.