

## National

## News snaps

## Habiganj Press Club executives

HABIGANJ, Jan 2: A 15-member executive committee of the district Press Club was formed for a two-year term in an election held at the club premises on Thursday, reports UNB.

Safiqur Rahman Chowdhury and Shamsul Alam Chowdhury Rahat were elected as president and general secretary respectively while M Abdus Shaheed and AHM Iqbal Ahmed were elected vice presidents. Other office-bearers are: joint secretary Harun-ur-Rashid Chowdhury, sports secretary Abdul Moin Chowdhury Tipu, cultural secretary Shoyeb Chowdhury, office and library secretary M Fazlul Rahman, treasurer M Niaz and members M Amir Hossain, Monsur Uddin Ahmed Iqbal, Syed Ashraf Uddin Mamun, Shamim Ahsan, Selim Azad and Abdul Bari Laskar.

## Manpower shortage in Health Deptt

PANCHGARH, Jan 2: A large number of posts in the health department here have been lying vacant for long causing immense suffering to the local people, reports UNB.

The patients are being deprived of necessary treatment due to the shortage of physicians and other staff members in different hospitals and health complexes. This has also created obstacles in performing day to day official work in the department. According to official sources, out of total 553 posts, 125 remained vacant since long. These include medical officers, dental surgeons, gynecologists, specialists, junior and senior consultants, junior health education officers, sanitary inspectors, nursing supervisors, nurses and technicians.

## 2 killed in Tangail road accident

TANGAIL, Jan 2: Two persons were killed and three others were injured in road accident on Tangail-Bhupur road near Shikolton on December 23, reports BSS.

The accident occurred when a rush driven truck hit a tempo with passengers. Abdul Mannan of village Bashuria and an unidentified woman of about 40 years died on the spot. Jamila, 25, of Kalihati village, Nazim, 25, of Bhupur and Abu Syeed of village Gagangati under Sirajganj district, passengers of the tempo were seriously injured. A case was registered with the Kalihati thana. The driver of the killer truck managed to escape.

## Gambling, vitiation atmosphere

NARSINGDI, Jan 2: Gambling and obscene dances are on in the name of Jatra at Marjal and Rainagar in Rajpur thana here violating the serene atmosphere, reports UNB.

Local people complained that an influential quarter organised the Jatra to earn money without any permission from the district administration. The local people in a protest rally demanded ban on the on-going Jatra without further delay. They later brought out a procession and handed over a memorandum to the district administration. While contacted police super said he did not give any permission for holding the Jatra.

## Massive wheat cultivation programme

PABNA, Jan 2: A total of 1,97,000 hectares of land will be brought under high yielding wheat cultivation in eight northern districts under Rangpur Agriculture Extension Zone during the current season, reports UNB.

According to an official source, the production target has been fixed at 3,94,000 metric tons. Of the total land, some 30,500 hectares will be cultivated in Rangpur, 24,000 hectares in Kurigram, 15,500 hectares in Gaibandha, 12,000 hectares in Lalmirhat, 16,000 hectares in Nilphamari, 45,000 hectares in Dinajpur, 14,000 hectares in Panchagarh and 40,000 hectares in Thakurgaon. The Agriculture Extension Department will set up six integrated demonstration plots in these districts to acquaint the farmers with the scientific methods of wheat cultivation.

## Pest-attack on Aman paddy field

BHERAMARA, Jan 2: At least five hundred hectares of transplanted Aman paddy field and Boro seeded have been attacked by pests in Bheramara, Kushtia, sadar, Khoksa, Kukmali, Mirpur and Daulatpur thanas of Kushtia district.

When contacted the Agriculture Extension Department sources told BSS that adequate measures have already been taken to combat the menace. The farmers, however, complained that acute scarcity of pesticides was prevailing in the district.

## Plots allotted to establish industries

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 2: The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) has allotted plots for establishment of seven industries in the district, reports BSS.

The decision was taken at a recent meeting presided over by the Deputy Commissioner, Kishoreganj AMM Farhad. Senior district level officers attended the meeting. The plots were allotted in favour of the following industries: Mouware Nail Industries, Uddog Food and Processing, Masum Paduka Industries, Rainik Food Processing Private Limited, Khondker Perfumery and Chemical Works, Ahmed Still Industries and Novel Enterprise.

## Contraband goods seized

MEHERPUR, Jan 2: The Bangladesh Rifles on December 22 seized Indian contraband goods worth about Taka two lakh from Dinajpur and Bidyadharpur villages under Meherpur thana, reports BSS.

An official source said the goods included Indian saree, sugar, salt, medicine, bicycle and spare parts of motor vehicles. Two cases were filed in this connection.

## New president, secy of Comilla Press Club

COMILLA, Jan 2: The annual election of the executive committee of Comilla Press Club was held on December 26 at its premises here, reports BSS.

Rezaul Karim Shamim and Nurur Rahman have been elected president and general secretary respectively of the 17th member executive committee. The annual general meeting of Comilla Press Club was also held on the same day with the outgoing president Zahirul Islam in the chair.

## LGED implementing 21 projects

BARISAL, Jan 2: The Local Government Engineering Department has been implementing 21 projects in Jhalakati district at an allocation of about Taka two crore in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the work of the project, includes construction and reconstruction of roads, culverts and box culverts. The work of these projects will begin soon and is expected to be completed by June 1998.

## Efforts on to ensure health for all

From A Correspondent

GAZIPUR, Jan 2: The Health and Family Welfare Minister, Salauddin Yusuf said here recently the present government has been making all out efforts to ensure Health for All by the year 2000 with particular emphasis on the health of women and children.

The minister was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session of the 3-day workshop on "implementing women's health programmes in the community operationalising the ICPD and Beijing plans of action in Bangladesh" held in the BRAC auditorium at Rajendrapur in Gazipur. The workshop was addressed, among others, by Faruq Ahmad Chowdhury, Advisor, BRAC, Dr Richard Cash, and Dr Sadia A Chowdhury, work-shop coordinators of BRAC.

## Work of Shishu Sadan progressing

CHUADANGA, Jan 2: Expansion work in the local shishu sadan is now nearing completion at a cost of Taka one crore 26 lakh, reports BSS.

Under the expansion scheme a dormitory with the capacity to accommodate 100 boys, a 1000 square feet staff-quarters, another 750 square-feet staff quarters, one office building, one training centre and a pre-primary school building are being constructed.

## Scarcity of fire wood

SYLHET, Jan 2: With the setting up of a large number of kilns for baking bricks, an acute scarcity of fire wood has been created in three districts of the Sylhet division, reports UNB.

The brick field owners in Sylhet, Moulvibazar and Habiganj districts are burning bushes, fruit bearing trees and even trees in tea gardens, defying the government ban in this regard. According to local people, an organised gang is involved with the brick field owners to supply fire woods to their kilns.

## 130 cases pending in Bogra

KURIGRAM, Jan 2: Nearly 130 cases have been pending in the Bogra Tribunal Court as a post of member (Judge) lying vacant for long, reports UNB.

The post in the Administrative Tribunal fell vacant after the retirement of the District Judge and the Tribunal member Muzibur Rahman. Sixteen districts of Rajshahi division and seven of Khulna division are under the purview of the Administrative Tribunal.



AGRI-VARSITY (Mymensingh): Prof Dr Muhammed Hussain, Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) addressing as chief guest at the inaugural function of a two-day long fourth annual conference and seminar on "Animal parasites and human health in Bangladesh" held under the auspices of Bangladesh Society for Parasitology at BAU campus.

## Arsenic detected in tubewell water in 203 villages

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Jan 2: Arsenic contamination of water has been detected in a large number of tubewells in 203 villages of the country.

Pabna is one of the districts where arsenic contamination has been detected in four thanas while conducting survey by Dhaka Community Hospital.

Prof Quazi Kamruzzaman, Chairman, Dhaka Community Hospital, who came to Pabna along with a high powered international team for surveying arsenic pollution of tubewell water in different districts of Bangladesh.

Prof Kamruzzaman disclosed to The Daily Star Correspondent, three villages of Baropara Union Parishad under Farikhat thana of Bagerhat district, six villages under Khan Jahan Ali Union Parishad of Rupsha thana under Kushtia district; two villages of Karamja Union under Santhia thana and four mahallas within Pabna Pourashabha; three villages of Poradaha Union Parishad under Mirpur thana; three villages under Mokarrampur of Bheramara thana of Kushtia district; six villages of Paksey Union under Ishurdi thana; five mahallas of Bera Pourashabha; Sujanagar village under Sujanagar Union Parishad, three villages under Satbaria Union; one village under Dulai Union of Sujanagar thana, four villages of Karamja Union under Rupsha thana under Kushtia district; two villages under Khanjia Union Parishad under Narayanganj district; two villages of Chandarkandi Union Parishad under Raipura thana; four villages of Damodar Union Parishad under Firdala thana, three villages of Magurasona Union under Daulatpur thana, and four villages under Ramnagar Union Parishad of Nagarkhana thana of Faridpur district; three villages of Hemardi Union Parishad under Bhanga thana; three villages of Hashimpur Union Parishad under Balakandi thana of Rajbari district, four villages of Rajbari thana; four villages of Kasundi Union Parishad under Sadar thana, four villages of Binodpur Union Parishad under Mohammadmur thana of Jessori Sadar thana; three villages of Gunungapar Union Parishad; two villages of Bidhananakandi Union Parishad under Jhikargachha thana of Jessori district; four villages of Rajbari Union Parishad of Chandpur thana; three villages of Haziganj Sadar thana; three villages of Sadullapur Union Parishad under Matlab thana, four villages of Rajbari Union Parishad of Chandpur thana; three villages of

sadar thana of Chandpur district; four villages of Chatkhali thana, six villages under Amanullahpur Union Parishad of Begumganj thana; Mirzapur villages of Natiswar Union Parishad under Noakhali district; six mahallas of Luximpur Pourashabha; five villages of Rajpur Union Parishad of Rajpur thana; four villages under Charbabil Union Parishad; three villages under Ramganj Union Parishad of Ramganj thana; three villages under Irabpur Union of Luximpur district; three mahallas within Narayanganj Pourashabha; six villages under Aminpur Union Parishad of Sonargaon thana; two villages under Shambupur Union Parishad; three mahallas of Fatulla Pourashabha under Narayanganj district; two villages of Chandarkandi Union Parishad under Raipura thana of Narayanganj district; four villages of Srinagar Union Parishad under Faridpur district; four villages of Purbo Sandalpur Union Parishad under Daudkandi thana of Comilla district; five villages under Kushali Union Parishad of Tungipara thana of Gopalganj district; five villages of Moksedpur Union Parishad under Moksedpur thana of Gopalganj district and several villages under Pirojpur district are under arsenic pollution of many tubewells.

Prof Kamruzzaman further disclosed that both the government of Bangladesh and also the World Bank have now come forward to detect arsenic pollution of tubewell water in Bangladesh. The work is like to be completed within three months.

## Water level falls in major rivers

PABNA, Jan 2: With the quick fall in water level and emergence of shoals in major rivers of the region, including Jamuna, some 15,000 boatmen have lost their job, reports UNB.

The prices of essential commodities in the areas which are communicated only by river routes, have gone up as water level in Baral, Padma, Dharola, Karota, Chiknai, Ichamati, Teesta, Barmaputra, Gumanai and Fulzora fell drastically.

While visiting various ghats in the region, this correspondent found transportation of goods and passengers through the rivers now remained suspended and a large number of boats are lying idle.

"With the disruption in river communication, the existence of marginal fishermen is now at stake ... normal life in char areas of Pabna, Sirajganj and Bogra has almost been paralysed," said a local school teacher.

Meanwhile, siltation in major rivers like Jamuna, Padma, Baral, Dharola, Karota, Ichamoti, Teesta and Brahmaputra has taken a serious turn, worsening the sufferings of the region.

"The situation will deteriorate further in the coming months," apprehended a school teacher.

**Smugglers attack task force, loot seized sugar at Joypurhat**

JOYPURHAT, Jan 2: The district task force on smuggling seized huge quantity of smuggled sugar in the early hours of today. But a gang of smugglers looted the sugar from local bus terminal after a few hours, reports UNB.

The task force seized the sugar from smugglers at Ganeshpur on Joypurhat-Bogra road. Later, while returning from the place, it raided several Bogra-bound buses and recovered more sugar smuggled from India.

But when the task force members, led by deputy commissioner (DC), entered the local bus terminal to raid some other buses, the smugglers attacked them unitedly pelting bricks and looted the sugar.

The DC fired four rounds of blank shots from his personal revolver to disperse the smugglers who, however, managed to escape safely with the looted sugar in presence of BDR personnel.

During the trouble, vehicular movement was suspended and the DC remained hostage for two hours in the bus terminal. Later, he was freed at the intervention of transport owners association and workers union leaders.

Earlier, on Wednesday night, the task force, led by Magistrate Mahabubur Rahman, seized 10,000 kgs of smuggled sugar from a truck on Bogra-Joypurhat road.

**Shortage of English teachers in educational instts**

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Jan 2: Standard of English education in 80 per cent of private and government colleges in the country has become so poor that 90 per cent students fail to write correct English. Condition of students obtaining English education from Madrasah is pitiable. As a result students after passing examination can not make good result later on.

There is a serious crisis of English teachers in colleges even in schools. Teachers in schools often fail to impart proper education to their students. Besides, guardians of these students being poor can rarely think of maintaining private tutors in the subject.

According to the existing rules each senior Madrasah requires a lecturers in English, an intermediate college requires two lecturers and a degree college requires three or more lecturers. But these institutions can hardly fulfil the existing rules mainly because of various reasons.

Non-availability of English teachers with requisite qualifications at least a second class both in honours and MA is the first reason. The second reason is: financial conditions of these colleges and senior madrasahs are not sound for which these institutions fail to recruit lecturers in English with requisite qualification. In most cases, the senior madrasahs can not even appointment part time teachers in English.

## Separate incidents claimed 509 in JESSORE last year

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Jan 2: A total of 509 death cases including 106 murder cases were recorded in eight thanas of the district during the year 1997.

The year 1997 started with four murders at Lajauri of Jhinkergachha thana in January of that year. It ended with triple murders at Siddipasha of Obhainagar in December last. Double murders were committed at RN Road in the local town in November last.

Besides, 125 persons were killed in road accidents, 20 in train accidents and 188 others were unnatural deaths (UD) during the year under review.

During the same year, two persons were killed in grenade explosion, two in bomb blast and two others drowned while 66 were killed by thunderbolt, electrocution and fire.

In 1996, the total number of murder cases in the district was more than that of 1997.

In 1996, a total of 121 persons were killed while in 1997, the number of such cases was 106.

## 2 alleged criminals arrested

CHITTAGONG, Jan 2: Detective Branch police, acting on a tip, arrested two criminals from Cawk Bazar Colony on the port city on Thursday, reports UNB.

The two arrested were identified as Yasin, 22, and Didarul Alam, 24, both hailing from village Shahnagar in Fatiullahi thana.

Police said both confessed to their involvement in several crimes, including Kalam member murder at Shahnagar.

About 580 species of guest birds are available in different sanctuaries of the country and of them 200 species are Siberian, according to an expert.

But the stay of these guest birds are being discouraged due to continued fishing in the water bodies by a section of local people and disturbance by bird hunters.



MYMENSINGH: Two trucks of the local municipality meant for carrying garbage lying out of order for a long time.

## Gaibandha Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Jan 2: Samina Khatun, a housewife of village Malibari under Gaibandha thana committed suicide by taking poison at her home on Dec 19.

According to police, at night a police contingent while patrolling the areas found two persons standing under a banyan tree. On challenge they fled away leaving 12 rounds of pistol bullets there. Police later recovered the said ammunitions from the spot. Police could not arrest the persons. Investigation is going on to apprehend the criminals.

## Illegal rifle recovered

Gobindaganj thana police in a tip recovered one 303 rifle under the bridge at Khalshi on Gobindaganj-Dinajpur road in the evening of November 15. The fire arm was found abandoned under the said bridge. AGD was filed with Gobindaganj thana. None was arrested in this connection.

## Chandpur TB Hospital ailing

From Our