

## News snaps

### Work of college bldg progressing

MEHERPUR, Jan 5: The construction work of academic buildings of two colleges in Gangni thana under Meherpur district is in full swing at a cost of Tk 32.50 lakh, reports BSS.

The project was taken up under non-government educational institution development project. According to the district facilities department, the construction of three storied academic building of Gangni College is nearing completion at a cost of Tk 16.50 lakh. The construction of two storied academic building of Kaziur College in the remotest corner of the thana has begun recently. Taka 16 lakh has been sanctioned for the project. The construction work will be completed by June next.

### Dredging of Arial Khan essential

MADARIPUR, Jan 5: The dredging of the river Arial Khan is essential for the smooth navigation and ensuring supply of water for irrigation purposes, reports UNB.

Once the river Arial Khan was a blessing for the people of the district for smooth navigation, huge fish resources and abundant supply of water for irrigation. The river was deep and wide but due to heavy siltation the river is gradually losing its depth and changing its courses. Merchant and cargo vessels are hardly visible now a days in the river due to emergence of a number of shoals. The river bank fishermen have already changed their profession due to acute scarcity of fish and the farmers living beside the river are facing problems due to shrinking of irrigation facilities in the dry season as the river is gradually drying up. The people urged the authority concerned to take immediate steps to dredge the river-bed to remove the accumulation of huge silts for smooth navigation.

### Body found

SYLHET, Jan 5: Police recovered a body from a residential hotel at Telihar area in the town on Friday, reports UNB.

The body of the boarder, identified as Kabir Ahmed, 51, son of Fazlur Rahman of Jahangir Sarak, Sabujbagh, Dhaka, was recovered after the hotel employees got no response from his room. Kabir was staying at room no. 114 of East End Hotel since December 29. Postmortem of the body was performed at Osmani Medical College Hospital and a case was lodged with the Kotwali police. Another message adds: Police arrested an Indian national from the town on Friday for travelling without valid documents. The arrested man was identified as Dr Paul Yusuf alias Asit of Mettapur in Calcutta. He was sent to jail custody and further investigation is on.

### Massive mustard farming programme

JHENIDAH, Jan 5: A total of 7,900 hectares of land in six thanas of the district have been brought under mustard cultivation in the current rabi season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, the production target has been fixed at 7,110 metric tons. Of the total land, 1,735 hectares will be cultivated in Sadar, 1,550 hectares in Kaliganj, 525 hectares in Kotchandpur, 1,950 hectares in Moheshpur, 1,575 hectares in Shailakupa and 565 hectares in Harinakunda thanas. Some 65 demonstration plots have been set up to acquaint the farmers with the modern methods of cultivation. Meanwhile, a total of 11,000 hectares of land in the district have been brought under lentil cultivation in the current season. Thana wise break-up of land is as follows: Sadar — 1,230 hectares, Kaliganj — 2,520 hectares, Kotchandpur — 1,285 hectares, Moheshpur — 3,540 hectares, Shailakupa — 1,735 hectares and Harinakunda — 890 hectares.

### Contraband goods seized

COMILLA, Jan 5: BDR 17 battalion seized huge quantity of contraband goods worth about Taka 19 lakh 50 thousand from different places in border areas of Comilla region, reports BSS.

BDR sources said, acting on a tip-off, the BDR in a special drive seized smuggled sares, sugar, milk powder, wine, ganja, bi-cycle and timbers from border areas in Bibir Bazar, Baoara Bazar, Salda Nadi, Nayanpur and Gangasagar areas from December 21 to December 28.

### Radha Krishna Puja in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, Jan 5: A month-long Radha Krishna Kirtan and Puja, a religious festival of the Hindu community concluded in the temple of Sree Sree Kani Lal zior at Barabo under Polash thana of the district on Thursday, reports BSS.

Thousands of devotees of all ages from the different parts of the country and India attended the Kurja Puja. On the occasion of Kurja Puja, a 4-day long Kurja Mela was held by the side of the temple. Members of the Hindu community performed one-day fasting on the concluding day of the puja.

### Valuables worth Tk 50,000 looted

SATKHIRA, Jan 5: Two dacoities were committed in two thanas of the district on December 30 and 31, reports BSS.

Police sources said about 15 to 16 armed dacoits entered forcibly into the house of bank officer Syed Habibur Rahman of village Kashimpur under sadar thana at the midnight on December 30. The dacoits robbed cash with other valuables worth about Taka fifty five thousand from the house. In another incident, a group of armed dacoits entered forcibly into the house of Girandro Nath Mondal of village Jelekhali under Shyamnagar thana at the midnight on December 30. The dacoits looted cash with other valuables worth about Taka one lakh from the house. Separate cases were filed with sadar and Shyamnagar thana.

### 400 more villages electrified

BHERAMARA, Jan 5: Four hundred villages under six thanas of greater Kushtia district have, so far, been brought under rural electrification network, reports BSS.

The Kushtia Pali Bidyut Samity gave thirty two thousand connections in the districts. The rural electrification authority have installed about two thousand kilometres of transmission lines. Extensive programmes will be implemented to bring more villages of the district under electrification network.

### Contraband seized

MANIKGANJ, Jan 15: Shibabala thana police on Saturday seized 279 bottles of contraband phensidyl syrup from the roof of a Dhaka-bound passenger bus at Aricha ghat, reports BSS.

Acting on secret information, police raided a bus on its way to Dhaka from Rangpur and seized the contraband item. A case was filed but none was arrested in this connection, police said.

### Arms seized: 222 arrested

KHULNA, Jan 5: Police in a special drive against anti-social elements recovered 13 illegal arms and arrested 222 criminals from different districts of Khulna police range between December 30 and January 2, reports BSS.

Police source said the unauthorised arms include one Chinese rifle, two piqueurs, two shatterguns and one dbbl. Police arrested 222 persons on various charges from different areas.

### Ansar, VDP assembly

TANGAIL, Jan 5: The annual assembly of Tangail district Ansar and VDP members was held at local Bhasani Hall recently, reports BSS.

A total of 600 Ansars and VDP took part in the assembly. Md Abdul Kuddus, Deputy Director of the Ansar and VDP Directorate attended the function as chief guest and distributed prizes among 138 best Ansar and VDP members. Among others Md. Abdus Sattar, Superintendent of Police, Tangail spoke on the occasion. M Abdul Gaiyum, ADC General, Tangail presided over the function.

### Workshop on role of journalists

MANIKGONJ, Jan 5: A two-day long workshop on "the role of local journalists in water and sanitation promotion" concluded here on December 29, reports BSS.

A total of 15 local journalists took part in the workshop sponsored by NGO Forum for drinking water supply and sanitation.

### Kishoreganj hospital being extended

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 5: Public Works Department has been implementing the construction work of the extension of Kishoreganj Sadar hospital building and four quarters for the officers and the employees, reports BSS.

According to official sources, the government has sanctioned about Taka one crore for the construction of the new buildings.

### Incidents of stealing of vehicles rise

NOAKHALI, Jan 5: People, who own motor vehicles, are passing sleepless nights as incidences of stealing of vehicles and spare parts have been rising alarmingly in the district town, reports UNB.

People here said an organised gang in connivance with the influential quarters are engaged in the stealing, mainly side glasses, desk board, mile meter, cassette player, side lights and other parts of the engine, from different garages in the town at dead of night. Police administration said the gang took advantage of UP election, held recently, as most of their men were engaged in maintaining law and order in the polling centre areas. However, police said they arrested some of the people on suspicion but failed to find out the real culprits.



BARISAL: A two-day long Bengali cultural festival started here at the central Shaheed Minar on Sunday. Barisal Educational and Cultural Centre and Bengali Cultural Festival Celebration Council jointly arranged the festival. Educationist Prof Hanif inaugurated the festival. — Star photo

## 12 killed in UP poll violence in Barisal

## Fresh re-election date at 4 centres in Sylhet announced

SYLHET, Jan 5: Fresh date has been announced for holding re-elections at four union parishad polling centres in the district, reports UNB.

Fresh voting, where elections were postponed following violence, will now be held on January 12, district election officials said.

The centres are: Lamagaon Talukderpara government primary school centre of Moghulgaon union in Sadar thana, Jalurmukh centre of Mandirgaon union in Goalinghat thana, Sreedhara primary school centre of Bianibazar union and Malibagh primary school centre of Muria union in Bianibazar thana.

Adequate security measures would be taken for holding the elections peacefully, official sources said.

Our Barisal correspondent

reports: At the end of the Union Parishad elections post-polls violence are still going on in the southern districts.

From the beginning of UP elections till writing of this report at least 12 persons were killed and nearly 600 others injured in pre and post-polls violence in six southern districts under Barisal division in 28 days of elections.

Of the total one person was killed in Barisal, two in Bhola, two in Jhalakati, one in Patuakhali, four in Barguna and two in Pirojpur districts.

Nearly 600 people were injured in pre and post-polls violence in different places of Barisal division amid firing of shots, explosions of hand bombs, armed clashes between rival groups, stabbing, cutting of \*\*\* burning houses, and ransackings centres.

Polls remained suspended in 23 centres out of more than 400 unions in the division. Polling remained suspended in these centres following alleged irregularities and widespread clashes between the rival candidates.

Election Commission took decision to hold re-elections in the suspended centres between December 27, to January 15, '98. Decision also has been taken to take stern actions against the on-duty officials in the elections who showed negligence in their duties.

Meanwhile, Thana Nirbahi Officers (TNOs) were withdrawn and two others transferred, show cause notice were served against 8 returning officers, 6 presiding officers were temporarily suspended and were sent to the jail hajat. Besides, four officers in-charge of 4 thanas were closed.



MYMENSINGH: A colourful procession was brought out on December 25 in the town in observance of Bengali cultural festival organised by the local educational and cultural centre. —Star photo

## Road accidents on rise

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Jan 5: Road accidents are on rise in Kushtia district.

All these accidents are taking place due to poor knowledge of the drivers as most of them have got fake licenses, informed sources said.

About 14 people lost their lives in road accidents which took place in different places of the district during last 4 months. Most of the accidents happened due to negligence of drivers. About 15 persons were injured in a road accident at nine mile point of Kushtia-Bheramara road on October 13. The accident occurred when a Kushtia bound bus skidded off the road and fell into a ditch as the driver lost control of the steering.

A boy was crushed under the wheel of a speeding truck on Kushtia-Jhenidah road near Bhadalia bazar on October 21.

Nuri Khatun, 35, wife of late Siraj of Swastipur in sadar thana was killed on the spot when she was hit by a running truck on Kushtia-Jhenidah road on December 7. Mizan of village Ratulpur in sadar thana was seriously injured when a speeding microbus hit him on Kushtia-Jhenidah road.

On December 21, He was on his way to Ratulpur bazar. He died after admission to the Kushtia General Hospital. Three persons including two women were killed on Kushtia-Jhenidah road at 13 mile point when a speeding bus hit one rickshaw van on October 17. They were rushed to Kushtia General Hospital where they succumbed to injuries.

One person was killed and 25 others were injured in a road accident on Kushtia-Bheramara road on October 10. According to witnesses the overloaded bus turned turtle and fell into a ditch as the driver lost control over the steering killing Fakhrul Alam, 32, of Char

### 100 houses gutted in Khulna

KHULNA, Jan 5: A fire gutted over 100 houses at Sahabpara slum in railgate area of the city on Sunday reports UNB.

Fire brigade sources said the fire originated from a house of the slum at 5:10 pm and engulfed the entire slum. The cause of the fire could not be known immediately.

Damukdia in Bheramara thana and cashier of Agrani Bank Golapnagar branch on the spot.

Namun, 4, son of Moham-mad Hossain of village Baguan in Daulatpur thana was crushed under the wheel of a truck on Kushtia-Pragpur road on October 9. Two persons were killed and 10 others injured when a overloaded bus bound for Bheramara lost control on Kushtia-Bheramara road and turned turtle on September 6. Of the dead one was identified as Hashem, son of Moniruddin Pramanik, of village Khadinpur under Mirpur thana and another was a woman of the Housing Estate of Kushtia town.

Four persons travelling on the roof of a bus were killed on the spot when they were hit by a branch of tree on Kushtia-Mohishundi road in the month of August. The victims were identified as Khairuddin, 28, Hossain Ali, 18, Nizamuddin 35 and Abul Hossain, 30.

It may be mentioned that overloading and taking passengers on roof top have become a regular feature in the district endangering the lives of passengers. This happens under the very nose of the member of law enforcing agencies.

## 4 Rajshahi Edn Board officials sued

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 5: Four Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinees of 1997 under Rajshahi Education Board have filed a case with the sadar Senior Assistant Judge Court of Rajshahi against Rajshahi Education Board authorities demanding publication of their withheld results of examination.

The defendants are chairman, chairman-in-charge secretary and controller of examinations of the board.

The petitioners said, they filled in the forms of HSC examinations as retained candidates from their concerned colleges duly and appeared in the examination peacefully without any objection from the board authorities, but the board authorities in a meeting held on May 20 last year (1997) decided to cancel the results of the retained examinees. Challenging the decision of the meeting, the four candidates filed the case.

The plaintiffs are Farid Hossain and Sharifa Yeasmin of Karotoa College of Sirajganj, Kamal Hossain Talukder of Mohanagar College of Rajshahi and Sohail Haider of Tarash College of Sirajganj.

## Transport strike in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 5: Flying of bus and minibuses will be suspended from Monday in the Sylhet-Sunamganj road as Sylhet Bus-Minibus Owners group went on a sudden strike on Sunday afternoon and the Transport Workers Association of Sunamganj district has called the strike from next morning.

Agitated workers damaged at least five mini-buses and fell five others into the roadside ditch on different places along the Sylhet-Sunamganj highway during the last two days as sequel to a longstanding dispute between the Sunamganj Bus-Minibus Owners Association and Sylhet Bus Owners group.

## Transport strike in south-western zone threatened

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Jan 5: Transport workers in south-western zone will go on a 48-hour token strike from 6 am on January 12 if the authorities concerned fail to accept their 6-point demand by January 11.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the south-western zonal committee of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samik Federation (Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation), held here recently.

The demands include release of driver, supervisor and helper arrested on charge of dacoity in a night coach on Dhaka-Dhamrai road in November last year, deployment of security force in night coach, cancellation of registration of transport workers unions in Narail, Kushtia and Moheshpur, stoppage of toll collection at Kamarkhali of Faridpur and at Daulatdia ghat and solution to traffic jam at Aricha.

## Prices of essentials up in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, Jan 5: Prices of essential commodities have registered all time high just with the advent of the month of holy Ramadan, reports UNB.

The greedy stockists, wholesalers and general traders have increased the prices of daily necessities to earn windfall profit. In cases of some commodities they have increased the prices to two or three times higher than those prevailing few days before.

According to local people, the prices of rice, atta, flour, pulses, vegetables, sugar, soyabean, onion, tomato, fish, egg, milk and meat have increased sharply in different markets.

Meanwhile, many people have been suffering from various intestinal diseases due to consumption of adulterated soyabean and mustard oil which are now being sold at Tk 50 and Tk 60 per litre respectively.

Coarse rice is being sold between Tk 14 and Tk 15, medium quality at Tk 16 and fine quality between Tk 17 and Tk 18 per kg. Ata is being sold between Tk 13 and Tk 14 per kg.

Prices of beef, mutton, fish, sugar and winter vegetables have also shot up abnormally hitting hard the low-income group of people.

Moreover, prices of molasses, patai, green pepper, dry chilly, spices, banana and other fruits have increased beyond the purchasing capacity of the common people.

## Cold wave victims demand blankets

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Jan 5: Rush blankets and necessary warm clothes in five cold wave gripped districts of greater Rangpur zone to save thousands of distressed people from severe cold, it was now strongly demanded by the victims, according to the informations received from far flung areas of the zone.

The cold wave which is now being intensified following fast dropping of the mercury caused worst sufferings to the poor and low income group of people consisting almost 80 per cent people out of total 70 lakh population of the zone.

The government relief is quite inadequate to cope with the sky high demands of the cold wave stricken distressed people of the zone, it was alleged by officials of the district administration.

Eyewitnesses describing harrowing tales of thousands of

cold wave hit victims scattered across remote shoal and rural areas said, just after sun-set people of all ages are found shivering. In futile they try to escape from the biting cold wave.

They set ablaze to hey and other dry things to keep their bodies warm. Then around the fire and they pass sleepless nights, they added. In such an inhuman manner the rural people are now passing their nights all over the zone, it was alleged.

It is a pity and heart-touching that vast population in the zone have no minimum number of warm clothes. Rather they are semi-naked bodies to escape from the severe cold, eyewitnesses further alleged.

There are a large number of people particularly old and infants who are being attacked with cough and cold wave prone diseases. Many of them died.

## Satkhira Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Jan 5: The 26th Victory Day was celebrated throughout the district with a renewed pledge to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

The day's programme started with placing of wreaths at local Central Shahid Minar at midnight. The national flag was hoisted at all public and private buildings.

A ceremonial march past was held at Satkhira stadium at 8 am. Police, Ansar, member of BNCC, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and students of different educational institutions participated in the march past. Deb Dutta Khisa, Deputy Commissioner, Satkhira, took salute.

The day's other programmes were reception to the family members of Shahid Freedom Fighters (FFs) of the district, distribution of improved diets among the prisoners of local jail, patients of hospital and members of local Shishu Sadan, special prayers in all places of worship for the peace and prosperity of the country. Sports competitions were held for males and females at local stadium. A friendly football match was held in this connection.

## Action against attacker sought

The journalists of the national and local dailies at Satkhira in a joint statement on December 21, strongly condemned and protested what they said, "obstructing the circulation and sale of Dainik Purbanchal through destructive activities."

The signatories to the statement are Abdul Multalib, President, Satkhira Press Club, Prof Abu Ahmed (Daily Star), Abdul Wazed Kachi (Inqilab), Anisur Rahim (Editor, Daily Satkhira Chitra), Nazmul Alam Malik (Daily Kafela), Prof Pabitra Mohon Das (Ajker Kagoj), Mosharrar Hossain (Al-Ameen), Mizanur Rahman (Janakantha), Advocate Abdul Rashid (Independent) and Nurul Islam Shoron (Pathokher Kagoj).

They urged the authorities concerned to take necessary action against the attackers so that the newspaper may be published without any threat.

## One killed in road accident

One person was killed in a road accident near at Patkelghata under Tala thana on Khulna-Satkhira road on December 21.

The victim was identified as Saidur Rahman, 20, son of Abdul Hamid of village Talikufi under Tala thana of the district.

## Pry edn being hampered

PABNA, Jan 5: Primary education in the district is being hampered seriously due to various reasons, reports UNB.

Guardians and local people said negligence of duty, scarcity of necessary appliances, dilapidated conditions of school buildings, out-dated teaching method and lack of inspection are the main problems that are hampering the universal primary education programme.

Officials said the number of primary schools and other primary-level institutions in the district is 2,231. These include government and private primary schools, madrasahs, kindergarten, community and satellite schools and non-formal education school run by various NGOs.

The total number of enrollment in these institutions is 3,41,280 as against the total

number of school-age boys and girls which stands at 3,95,898 leaving over 44,000 children out of education.

According to official figure, the rate of drop-outs in the district is about 40 per cent. The sources said a total of 37,541 students from the total enrollment of 79,830 in 1992 left their schools. By 1996, some 59,773 students completed their primary level education.

The drop-outs are going to the labour market increasing the number of child labourers in the district.

## Villagers' clashes leave 15 hurt in Gaibandha

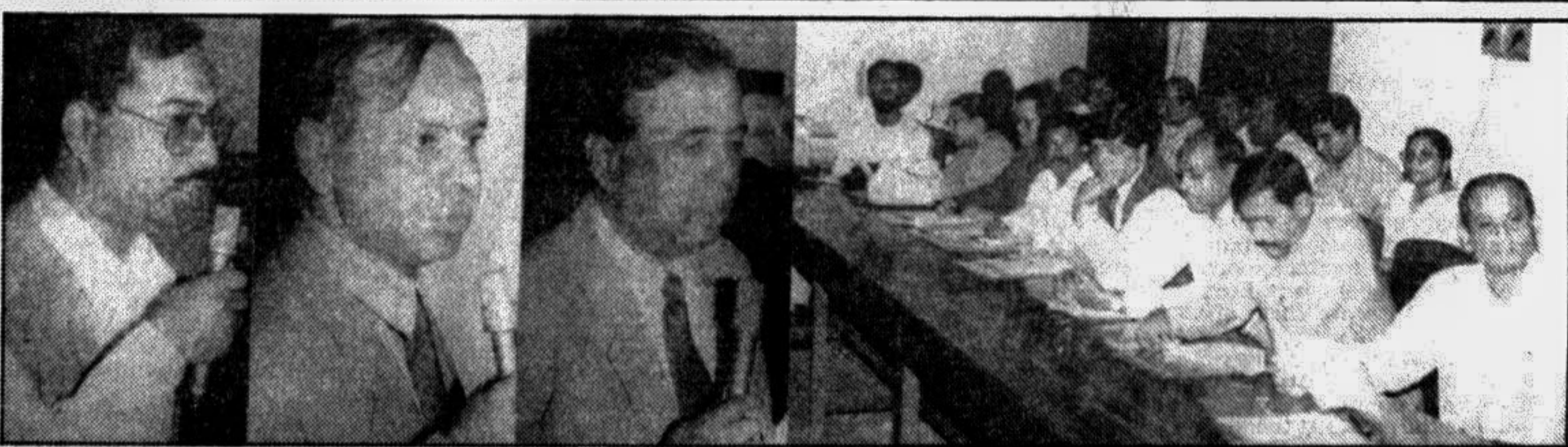
GAIBANDHA, Jan 5: At least 15 people were injured in two separate clashes on Sunday among the villagers in Govindaganj thana of the district, reports UNB.

Local people said, 11 people sustained injuries at Panitola following a row between Haider Ali and Abdul Majid over fishing in a disputed pond of the village.

Four people were injured in Bishubari village in another clash over a trifling matter. The injured were admitted to Govindaganj health complex.

A message from Khulna adds: Police arrested a young man with a sawed-off rifle and three rounds of bullets from the town on Sunday.

Mirza Mahmud, reportedly an activist of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, was arrested from east Baniakhamar main road in the morning.



RAJSHAHI: Ministry of Health and National Cancer Research Institute and Hospital jointly arranged an anti-bacco workshop at the calculation centre of Rajshahi Medical College recently. Prof Shafiu Rahman (right), Principal of Rajshahi Medical College inaugurated the workshop. Prof Abu Obaid Mohammad Mohsin and Prof Daemuddin (right to left) presented papers. — Star photo