

News snaps

Wild life on verge of extinction

MADARIPUR, Jan 7: Several species of wild life are on the verge of extinction in greater Faridpur district due to indiscriminate use of insecticides, destruction of forest and unabated hunting of birds, reports UNB.

According to specialists, the already extinct species include porcupine, for and jungle cat. Lizards (golden gui and black gui) are being caught at random for exporting their skins violating the government ban. Massive use of pesticides on cropland is the main reason behind gradual extinction particular species of fish, frogs and birds. Mongoose and other rare animals of the same species have already vanished following the destruction of forest. The affected districts are Madaripur, Faridpur, Rajbari, Gopalganj and Shariatpur.

No hostels for female students

BARGUNA, Jan 7: The female students of the district have been facing acute problems to prosecute their studies for want of hostel facilities, reports UNB.

According to official sources, there are about 2000 girl students studying in two colleges and two girls high schools including one government school in the town. Female students from far flung areas have been enrolled in the schools and colleges in the town in absence of institutions in their respective areas. Many female students who have no relatives in the town have been facing residential problems and are being forced to discontinue their studies. Female students living in different areas of the town have been facing troubles to reach their respective institutions in time due to traffic jam and other related inconveniences.

Man hacked to death

JHALAKATI, Jan 7: A middle-aged man was hacked to death reportedly by his brothers over land dispute at Galua Durgapur village in Rajapur thana early Monday, reports UNB.

The victims was identified as Abul Mannan, 40. His wife Mahinur Akhter, 32, also suffered severe injuries when the attackers chopped them indiscriminately. Police said Mannan's brothers - Abdul Majid and Abdus Sattar - entered his house at dead of night and attacked them with knives when they were sleeping. Mahinur was admitted to Rajapur health centre. A case was filed with local police against Abdul Majid, Abdus Sattar and Babul, brother-in-law of Majid.

Couple die of food poisoning

MEHERPUR, Jan 7: A couple died of food poisoning and five people fell sick at Polashipara village in Gangni thana of the district today, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said all the victims fell sick soon after taking dinner with fish on Sunday. Rahela Khatun, 45, died of poisoning at her house this morning. 12 hours after taking meal, while her husband sultan Biswas, 60, later died at Gangni Health Complex. Rest of the victims, admitted to the health complex, were identified as Liakat, 35, Morzina, 16, and Beauty, 9, family members of the deceased, and their servant Imrul, 24, and a minor girl of neighbouring house Rekha, 5. The condition of Liakat was stated to be critical.

PIB DG visits Moulvibazar Press Club

MOULVIBAZAR, Jan 7: Director General of the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) Dr Sheikh Abdus Salam visited Moulvibazar Press Club recently, reports BSS.

The PIB DG exchanged views with the working journalists of Moulvibazar. An informal meeting was held in this connection at press club building with Azizul Haque, Vice President of the club in the chair. General Secretary of the Press club M. Salam, Syed Abu Zafar Ahmed, Rajat Kanti Goswami, Abdul Hamid Mahbub and Ratan Kanti Chakraborty took part in the discussion. Dr Sheikh Abdus Salam, said that a PIB training course for the working journalists of Moulvibazar will be held in the near future.

Uplift schemes progressing

MEHERPUR, Jan 7: Work on 20 rural infrastructure development schemes at a cost of Tk 49 lakh in new thana Mujibnagar of the district are progressing fast, reports BSS.

According to Local Government Engineering Department sources 50 per cent work has already been completed and the rest work is expected to be completed by June next. The work includes Rajapur-Mujibnagar road, culverts and bridges. After the implementation of the schemes road communication in the district will be improved to a great extent.

Indian goods seized

SATKHIRA, Jan 7: Members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized various kinds of Indian goods during in five days, reports BSS.

The BDR members of 21 battalion of Satkhira raided several border areas of the district and seized the Indian goods smuggled into Bangladesh. According to BDR sources, the goods include salt, sugar, sares, apple, cumins, pomegranate, injection, bicycle, trout fish, grass carp fish, mustard oil, nylon net, milk power, potato and 183 bottles of phensidyl syrup. The goods were deposited with the Satkhira Customs.

Cultural programme concludes

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 7: A fifteen day-long cultural and sports programme under the auspices of Moinul Smriti Sangsad concluded here on December 29, reports BSS.

The concluding day's function was attended by former law, justice and parliamentary affairs minister Habibul Islam Bhuiyan as the chief guest. The function was attended, among others, by M Abdul Latif, Prof Jalal Ahmed, Prof MA Kabir, Md Akkas Ali, and Abu Khaled Pathan.

The chief guest distributed prizes among the competitors.

Seminar on Vested Property Law

TANGAIL, Jan 7: A seminar on 'vested property law and its influence: Problems and solution' was held at local public library auditorium on December 30, reports BSS.

Dr Kazi Md Akbar Hossain, a researcher, a university research corporation, Bangladesh presented the main paper on the occasion.

Among others, advocate A Rashid, advocate Tara Pada Day, advocate Kamakhya Nath Sen, advocate Sabi Roy, advocate Alamgir Khan Menu, Prof Nazir Hossain, Khushi Kabir, Aroma Ghuha and Shamsul Huda discussed on the paper. Association for Land reform and Development and 'Nizera Kari' are the two NGOs sponsored the seminar presided over by Principal Sekander Hayet. The seminar stressed the need for repeal of the law.

IU hall to be named after Bangabandhu

KUSHTIA, Jan 7: Two new halls of Islamic University will be named after Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib, reports BSS.

The decision was taken on December 31, in a Syndicate meeting presided over by Vice-Chancellor Prof Mohammad Kayesuddin. Out of 10 Syndicate members eight were present in the meeting.

Boy killed in road accident

SATKHIRA, Jan 7: A teen-aged boy was crushed under the wheels of a speedy truck at Noornagar in Kaliganj thana on Saturday evening, reports UNB.

Police said the victim identified as Abdul Quader, 14, of Pijrajan in Kaliganj thana while crossing the road was run over by the vehicle killing him on the spot.

Police seized the truck but the driver managed to escape. The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was lodged with the police.

Jhenidah Press Club executives

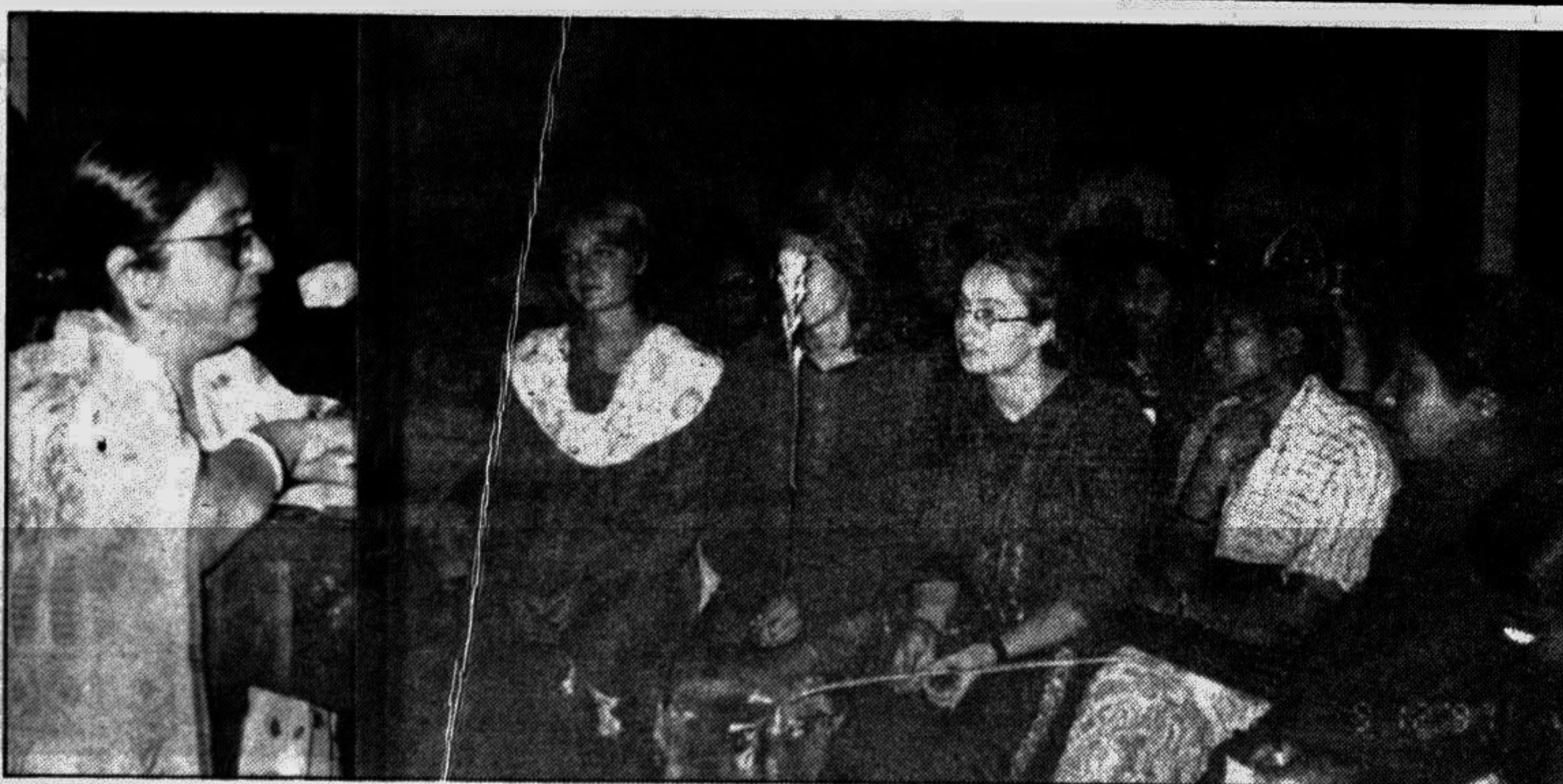
JHENIDAH, Jan 7: A 15-member new executive committee of the local Press Club was formed in an election held at its premises on Tuesday, reports UNB.

MA Ansari and Zahid Hossain Biplob have been elected as president and secretary respectively. Other office bearers are: Vice-president - M Quamruzzaman, joint secretary - Mahmud Hasan, sports secretary - Alamgir Kabir, library secretary - Habibul Bashar, office secretary - Azad Rahman and members - Tayeb Ali Joardar, Nazrul Islam, Islamuddin, Mustafa Mazed, Saiful Mabub, Mizanur Rahman, Abdul Mannan and Nizamuddin Joardar. District Election Officer Khandakar Mizanur Rahman conducted the election.

Water-logging hampers Boro farming

SYLHET, Jan 7: Boro crop can not be cultivated on 1,200 acres of land in different haor areas of three unions in Chhatrak thana for long due to water-logging, reports UNB.

According to an estimate, farmers of 50 villages of the surrounding haor areas can produce crops worth about Tk 2 lakh if water outlet facilities are arranged by the administration. The farmers said for the last several years they have been demanding of the authorities to take necessary steps to remove water-logging from their cultivable land. But no step has yet been taken in this regard. They urged the higher authorities to take immediate measures to construct link canals for safe water outlet to help remove their long suffering.



PABNA: Purabi Maitra, a leader of Nari Forum delivering his presidential speech at a women's rally held recently at Ananda Govinda Public Library auditorium in the town. Mohila Parisad, Jatiya Mohila Unayan Sangstha, Shikha-0-Sanskriti Charcha Kendra and Nari Forum jointly organised the rally. — Star photo

Cold wave claims 35 in Rajshahi, 1 in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 7: Cold wave has claimed at least 35 people in the district during the last 16 days.

The dead are mostly old and children.

The bone-biting cold wave has continued to sweep all over the northern region of the country paralysing normal life. Incidence of winter related diseases have increased due to cold wave.

According to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital sources, patients of respiratory problems like asthma, pneumonia, common cold, bronchitis, tonsillitis are getting admissions in increasing number. The sources, however, said that deaths due to coldness had not increased though the suffering of the patients increased.

Meanwhile, a source unwilling to be named informed that 14 people died of cold related diseases this week in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, two from Ward No 14, one from Ward No 13, two from Ward No 16, four from Ward No 15 and one from Ward No 17.

On the other hand, prospect of Rabi crops cultivation like mustard, lentil and winter vegetables turned bleak due to continuous dense fog and bitter cold. Pest-attack, especially of viral and fungal have increased, BADC sources said.

Our Faridpur Correspondent adds: Dense fog across the district since January 4 has paralysed normal activities of the people causing untold sufferings to the people.

Day labourers suffered most. Launches and engine boats could hardly ply in different water route in the river Padma.

A few buses plied between Dhaka and Faridpur. The transports are too late to reach their destinations due to this foggy weather. As a result the national dailies have been reaching Faridpur town at 3 pm instead of 8-30 am for the last few days. Even the sun was not visible for days together as it was covered with fog all day long.

Moreover, cold wave that has been sweeping across the district has claimed the life of

One shot dead in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Dec 7: One person was shot dead at village Bakshipur under Kotchandpur thana of the district.

Police said, Matiar Rahman, 55, of village Bakshipur was returning home from Kotchandpur at about 12:15 pm. When he reached near Bakshipur-Balarampur road two gunmen fired at him. He died on the spot.

A case was filed with Kotchandpur thana in this connection but none was arrested till filing of this report.

Illegal toll being collected from engine boats

From Our Correspondent

NARSINGDI, Jan 7: Illegal toll collections from engine propelled boats at different river ghats in the district has become a common phenomenon.

Narsingdi is the eighth largest river port of the country. As a result a lot of traders depends on this river route. But businessmen become hostages at the hands of illegal toll collectors. They extort money in collaboration with local influentials.

A huge quantity of commodities are carried from weekly hats of the district, to different commercial centres like Narayanganj, Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Dhaka and Manikganj.

Illegal toll collectors collect Tk 50 to Tk 100 from each boat on the river by force. They even assault the businessmen and boatmen if they refuse to pay them toll.

Police seem to be indifferent to check such crimes.

Participation of womenfolk in the election was high due to the enactment of the provision for electing female members to the union parishad for the first time. Much enthusiasm was marked among the people in the remote villages during the elections.

Many people who have been staying abroad especially in United Kingdom (UK) for years together, also came to the country just to participate in the election race. Many others extended their helping hands to relatives and friends here. Remittance from abroad got sharp rise during the election period as many people sent money with a view to helping their relatives. Even many people came to the country. Some of them also contested.

The law-enforcing agencies arranged meetings and rallies

ments increased.

On the other hand, prospect of Rabi crops cultivation like mustard, lentil and winter vegetables turned bleak due to continuous dense fog and bitter cold. Pest-attack, especially of viral and fungal have increased, BADC sources said.

Our Faridpur Correspondent adds: Dense fog across the district since January 4 has paralysed normal activities of the people causing untold sufferings to the people.

Day labourers suffered most. Launches and engine boats could hardly ply in different water route in the river Padma.

A few buses plied between Dhaka and Faridpur. The transports are too late to reach their destinations due to this foggy weather. As a result the national dailies have been reaching Faridpur town at 3 pm instead of 8-30 am for the last few days. Even the sun was not visible for days together as it was covered with fog all day long.

Moreover, cold wave that has been sweeping across the district has claimed the life of

an old man on Alimuzzaman bridge in the town on the night of January 5. His identity could not be known immediately.

Crimes rising alarmingly

MADARIPUR, Jan 7: Crimes are on alarming rise in the town causing concern among the peace-loving people, reports UNB.

The dwellers alleged that in the recent months theft, robbery, hijacking, murder, rape, prostitution and gambling have increased in an alarming proportion.

An organised gang of hoodlums are engaged in a various anti-social activities with the connivance of an influential quarter.

Guardians also expressed concern over the sudden rise of gay girls in the town. The teen-aged gay girls are seen roaming around the streets enticing the youths.

Besides, the rate of divorce has also increased in the district due to poverty in the rural areas. The divorcees, mostly young and poor, are resorting to anti-social activities for their mere survival.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to combat the rising crimes in the town to ensure peace and security of the dwellers.

2 killed in Sylhet road accidents

SYLHET, Jan 7: Two people were killed in two separate road accidents on Wednesday in the district, reports UNB.

Police said a van-puller named Bachan Mia was hit by a microbus at Dayamir bazar on Dhaka-Sylhet highway. He was rushed to a health centre where the attending doctor declared him dead.

Meanwhile, another man identified as Abdus Shobhan who died on the spot when ran over by a truck at Islampur in Companiganj thana on Sylhet-Companiganj road.

Women participated in greater number in UP elections

From Md Iqbal Siddique

In the district of Sunamganj, two presiding officers were arrested on charge of illegally stamping of votes in favour of their 'chosen' candidate. The Thana Family Planning Officer and Assistant Education Officer of Tahripur thana were also put under suspension by the authorities in charge of election irregularities in the incident.

In another incident, one person succumbed to his injuries in Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. He came under the attack of some activists of a rival chairman candidate in Chhatrak thana.

Official sources informed, of the total 98 unions in 11 thanas under the district of Sylhet, elections were held in 91 unions.

Polling in 846 centres out of the total of 860 were almost peaceful. But, elections were postponed due to untoward like clash, snatching of ballot box, ballot papers in at least four centres. These are, Lamagaon, Talukpara Government primary school under Mogalgaon union of Sylhet sadar thana, Jalurmukh centre of Nandirgaon under Gowainghat

thana, and Sridhara Government primary school and Maligram Government primary school of Beanibazar thana.

The District Election Officer has announced that re-polling in these centres will be held on January 12.

Necessary arrangements have been taken to ensure smooth polling on the day, government officials said. Additional security measures had been taken for each of the centres, the source added.

Besides, four teams of administrative officers led by four magistrates will be present in the centres the whole day, the source said.

Due to legal implications, elections in seven unions could not be held as term of these unions are yet to be completed, the source informed. These are, Khadimpura of Sylhet sadar, Rampasga of Biswanath, Kanaighat and Digbarpur west under Kanaighat, Dewanbazar under Balaganj and Rustampur and Purbia Jafiong unions under Gowainghat thana.

Meanwhile, authorities have already announced to hold the elections of Kanaighat union parishad on January 22.

Thick fog disrupts ferry services

LALMONIRHAT, Jan 7: A ferry carrying the passengers of Ekota inter-city express from Dhaka to Dinajpur was delayed by about 8 hours on Saturday night due to thick fog at Kawamari Char on river Jumuna, reports UNB.

According to Railway sources, the ferry, MV Sonargaon, began its journey for Balashi ghat from Bahadurabad but was stranded at the char around 1:30 pm because of heavy fog. It was anchored at the spot for eight hours.

The passengers experienced untold sufferings during the unscheduled stoppage at Kawamari Char.

The Ekota Express reached Dinajpur at 5:45 pm on Sunday instead of its scheduled arrival at 7:50 am.

Another report from Pabna adds: Thick fog disrupted ferry services on two routes of the Padma and Jamuna causing heavy traffic congestion at Aricha, Daulatdia and No-

takhola ferry ghats.

A long queue of vehicles stretching over five kilometres were seen on the Dhaka-Aricha highway on Sunday morning as ferries could not ply for 12 hours early on Friday and Saturday.

But, BIWTC officials told the situation showed signs of improvement after 883 vehicles were ferried up to 6 pm on Sunday.

About 2,500 vehicles remained stranded at the three ghats till 6 pm Sunday. These included 1270 at Aricha, 525 at Notakhola and 215 at Daulatdia, and about 500 more waiting outside the terminals, officials said.

A total of 24 ferries, including 10-Ro-Ro vessels, are carrying vehicles from the three ghats.

The congestion may ease further as the authorities continued dredging the river channels for smooth navigation.

Barisal Newsletter

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 7: One person was chopped to death and his wife seriously injured by some unidentified armed miscreants at village Galua under Rajapur thana in Jhalakati district Sunday midnight.

Police said a group of armed miscreants broke open the house of Abdul Mannan, 25, and chopped him to death on the spot. His wife Mahinur, 20, was also seriously injured. Police recovered the dead body of Abdul Mannan on Monday morning and sent to Barisal Medical College Hospital morgue.

A case was filed. None is arrested as yet. Reason of this murder could not immediately be ascertained, police said.

Red Crescent training

The 4-day long Red Crescent basic training course for Barisal Red Crescent unit core volunteers has been concluded here.

In the concluding ceremony Aziz Hasan, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) of Barisal was present as chief guest while Rakeya Khatun, Inspector of Schools was present as special guest.

The concluding ceremony was addressed by Syed Anisur Rahman, Adv Majbar Rahman Nantu, Ziaul Kabir, AHM Saleh and others. 19 core volunteers participated in training. They were awarded certificates.

Wheat cultivation programme

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has undertaken a programme to bring more than 80 thousand hectares of land under intensive wheat cultivation in 11 southern districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Barguna, Jhalakati, Pirojpur, Madaripur, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Sariatpur and Rajbari under Barisal Agriculture Extension Zone (BAEZ) during this current winter season.

Production target of wheat has been fixed at 1.55 lakh metric tons, official sources informed.

Separate clashes leave 20 hurt

At least 20 persons were injured in two separate clashes between rival groups in Kalapara thana in Patuakhali district recently.

According to witnesses, supporters of two groups led by Nasir Jamadder and Delwar

200 incidents of crimes last year

More than 200 incidents of rape, suicide, acid throwing, abduction and women and child repressions were occurred in Barisal division during last year ending 31st December '97.

Of the total, a survey report revealed, 55 women including teenaged and underaged children became victim of rape incidents in different times. 39 were killed after rape mostly by strangulation. 12 women of different ages became the victims of acid throwing. 17 people including children were abducted. 80 women and children became the prey of various types of repressions during that times, last year, in different places of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Barguna, Jhalakati and Pirojpur districts under this division.

PDB realises Tk 4cr outstanding bill

Power Development Board (PDB) Barisal zone has realised

Taka 4 crore 20 lakhs till December 30, '97 last under the declaration of surcharge on outstanding electricity bills payment from the consumers of Barisal district.

According to official sources, power sell and distribution division-1 collected 1 crore 70 lakh taka from Babuganj, Uzirpur and Gournadi thana area including a portion of Barisal town area from nearly 14 thousand power consumers while the division-2 collected nearly Taka 2 crore from 18 thousand consumers of Jhalakati, Rajapur, Nalchity, Khatalia and rest portion of the town area. More than 10 crore taka is still outstanding.

Road communication becomes hazardous

NARSINGDI, Jan 7: Road communication on Dhaka-Sylhet highway has become hazardous as road mishaps occur frequently due to reckless driving and overloading of vehicles, reports UNB.

Thousands of passengers travelling in this route have been experiencing great inconveniences everyday.

Defying the ban, the drivers allow passengers and goods on the rooftops of the vehicles and run at a high speed.

Consequently, road accidents occur off and on as the law enforcement agencies do not take any action against them.

Police sources in Narsingdi, Narayanganj and Kishoreganj said during the last year some 959 people were killed and over 1,200 injured in road accidents on the section of Dhaka-Sylhet highway which is under their jurisdiction.

But, local people and transport sources claimed that the number of casualties would be much higher than the official figure as many mishaps were not recorded with the police.

Local people said most of the buses and minibuses engage themselves in competition for picking up roadside passengers endangering the lives of the people on board.

The drivers even do not consider the capacity of their vehicles and stop here and there to pick up passengers causing unwanted delay in reaching the destinations.

Bad shape of roads, caused by various reasons including overloading of vehicles, is also a reason for frequent accidents on the route.

Rival groups' clash leaves 15 hurt in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 7: At least 15 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups over the possession of a disputed pond in Tarash thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Of the injured, three were admitted to Tarash Thana Health Complex in a critical condition.

Witnesses said the clash took place at Katamari village between the supporters of Mulla and Hamid groups over taking possession of the pond which the Grameen Bank also demanded the ownership.