

News snaps

Jumatul Bida observed

MADARIPUR, Jan 27: Jumatul Bida, the last Jumma prayer of the holy month of Ramadan, was observed here with due solemnity and religious fervour, reports BSS.

The main jamaat was held at the Baitul Jame mosque where a large number of devotees offered prayers. The musallis prayed for divine blessing of the Almighty Allah and peace, progress and prosperity of the country. The devotees also prayed for unity and solidarity of the Muslim Ummah on this occasion. Jumatul Bida was also observed in different mosques in Madaripur district with due religious solemnity.

Whip accorded reception

COMILLA, Jan 27: The newly-appointed whip of Parliament Mujibul Haque Mujib was accorded a reception here on Monday, reports UNB.

Mujib was elected from Comilla-12 constituency with Awami League ticket. The reception, presided over by eminent journalist Mostafa Golam Chowdhury, was addressed by local Awami League leaders.

Newly elected chairmen sworn in

MEHERPUR, Jan 27: Newly-elected chairmen and members of the district's union parishads were sworn in at a ceremony here on Monday, reports UNB.

The swearing in ceremony of 17 chairmen, 162 members and 54 women members were administered separately at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium by the Deputy Commissioner. Chairman of Mahajanpur union in Sadar thana could not attend the ceremony as he was in Kushtia jail.

Arms, ammunition recovered

KHULNA, Jan 27: Police recovered huge quantity of arms and ammunition from different parts of the city and arrested 255 people on various charges during the current month, reports UNB.

Officials said the firearms include five pipeguns, two country-made revolvers, one sawed-off rifle and one shotgun. Some 47 rounds of live bullets and arms-making equipments were also recovered during the period. Police in their drive seized various drugs including 64 bottles of Phenistyle, two KG ganja, foreign and home-made wines and rectified spirit.

Maize cultivation scheme in 11 S-districts

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 27: Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has undertaken a programme to bring 870 hectares of land under maize cultivation in 11 southern districts under Barisal Agriculture Extension Zone during this season.

This programme will include the district of Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Pirojpur, Barguna, Jhalakati, Madaripur, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Saripatpur and Rajbari. BADC will sell and supply more than 21,000 kgs of high yielding varieties of maize seeds to the farmers. Nearly 25,000 metric tons of maize is expected to be produced on 10,000 hectares of land in 64 districts in the country this year, official sources said.

4 inter-district dacoits arrested

JHENIDAH, Jan 27: Police have arrested four activists of inter-district dacoit gang by raiding different areas of the town on Tuesday night, reports UNB.

The arrested were identified as Korban, Seraj, Badsha and Mosharraf who were wanted in connection with a number of cases. According to the confessional statements of Sanjoy and Abdullah who were arrested on January 12 for criminal activities and coach dacoity, police in separate drives arrested the inter-district dacoits. A case has been filed against them and further police investigation is on.

Efforts on to give democracy a firm footing

BHOLA, Jan 27: Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed on Monday said peoples' representatives will run the country from village to the highest level of speeding up development and giving democracy a firm footing, reports UNB.

He was speaking at a rally of the newly elected chairmen, members and women members of 59 unions of the district at the town hall auditorium on Monday. Tofael said the government has made necessary arrangements for holding elections at all levels including Gram Parishad, Thana Parishad and pourashava. The Minister told the newly elected representatives that they are the leaders of grass roots level that is why they have to render their services to the people remaining above political affiliation and opinion.

R&H Deptt gets highest allocation

BARISAL, Jan 27: Roads and Highways (R&H) Department of Barisal region receives the highest allocation of Tk 63.65 crore out of total Tk 297.60 crore annual development budget of the current fiscal year for developing its rural infrastructures, official sources said, reports BSS.

The priority has been given to improve and expand the riverine communications in Barisal region rather than that of road transport here. Barisal region was also given top priority in the Taka 247.05 crore Annual Development Budget (ADB) allocation for the last 1996-97 fiscal year on the same geographical grounds, the sources added. Roads Highways Department (RHD) have been constructing the connecting growth centres with major commercial cities and towns.

BINA-AID field day held

TANGAIL, Jan 27: Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA) and Agriculture Extension Department (AID) jointly held a field day on the effectiveness on Mustard-4 recently, reports BSS.

Fifty farmers took part in the programme that was held in the auditorium Bashall College. Among others, Ator Rahman, Director (administration) of BINA, and Raisul Haider, Chief Scientific Officer spoke on the occasion. Ibrahim Khalil, Deputy Director, Agriculture Extension Department, Tangail presided over the function.

Indian cows recovered

SATKHIRA, Jan 27: The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel on January 25 seized fourteen Indian cows worth more than Taka 75,000 from Sonamankandi border area under Shyamnagar thana, reports BSS.

A case was lodged in Shyamnagar thana in this connection and the cows were handed over to the Basantapur Customs authorities.

Unidentified bodies recovered

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 27: Bhairab GRP recovered two unidentified bodies from Ramnagar bridge and Bhairab railway bridge recently, reports BSS.

In another incident a woman named Fazila Akter, 21, of Tarakandi village under Kuliarchar thana in Kishoreganj committed suicide by taking poison. She died in the hospital. Kuliarchar thana police sources said, she committed suicide due to family dispute. Postmortem of these bodies were done at Kishoreganj sadar hospital morgue. Separate cases were lodged with the respective thanas in this connection.

Rice distributed among poor men

RAJBARI, Jan 27: Relief and Disaster Management Ministry has distributed 4,377 metric tons of rice among 8,107 distressed families of 42 unions in four thanas under its VGD programme during last six months, reports UNB.

During the period, the ministry also distributed 73 mts of rice among fire, cyclone and flood affected families and allocated 170 bundles of CI sheets for 170 erosion-hit families in Pangsha thana under its VGF programme. Local MP Zillul Hakeem distributed the CI sheets to the distressed people for their rehabilitation.

1 killed in Satkhira road accident

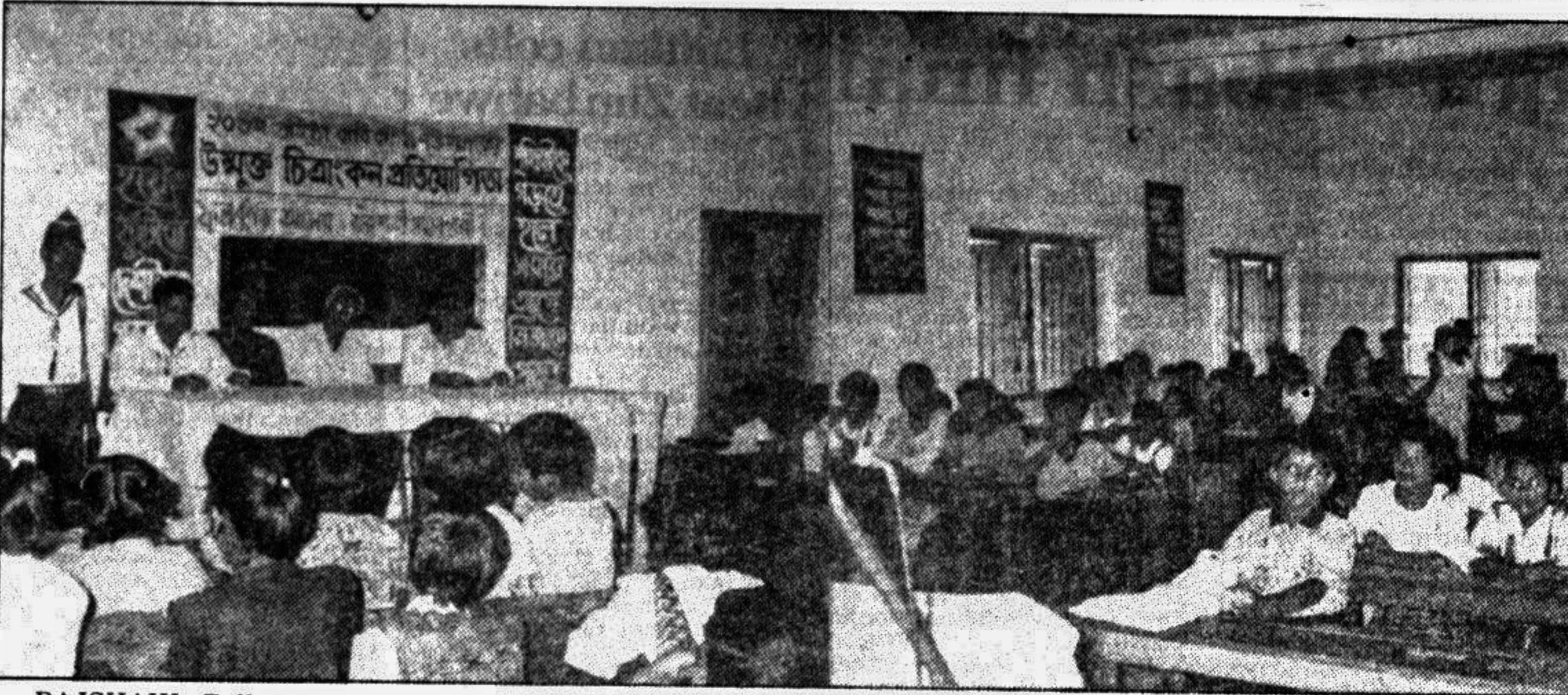
SATKHIRA, Jan 27: One person was killed in a road accident near Pirganj Bazar under Kaliganj thana of the district recently, reports BSS.

Police sources said, a Kaliganj bound truck ran over a man while he was trying to cross the road near Pirganj bazar. He died on the spot. The victim was identified as Abdul Kader of village Pirganj. The body was sent to Satkhira Sadar Hospital for autopsy. A case has been lodged with Kaliganj thana. The driver managed to escape.

Training course on Bengali pronunciation

TANGAIL, Jan 27: A week-long training course on Bengali pronunciation and spelling concluded at Anahua High School recently, reports BSS.

Chyaneer, a local educational organisation organised the training course. A total of 90 students of the school took part in the programme conducted by four instructors, Md Abu Mansur, a local educationist distributed prizes among the best participants in the concluding ceremony. The Chyaneer sources said that it will also conduct such course free of cost in different secondary schools of the district.



RAJSHAHI: Fulkuri Ashor, a juvenile association of the city recently organised an art competition for children at Loknath High School premises.

Many tea gardens yet to pay huge land tax

From Our Correspondent

Moulvibazar, Jan 27: Lano tax amounting to Taka two crore 12 lakh 67 thousand 633 remained unpaid. According to the source, a huge amount of land revenue has remained arrear to 8 out of 18 tea gardens under Baralekha thana. Gardenwise statement of unpaid revenue of Baralekha thana are Taka 35,10,800 from Sridharpur tea garden, Taka 11,29,744 from Kumersail tea garden, Taka 12,18,387 from Keramotnagar tea garden, Taka 20,51,880 from Chutalekha tea garden, Taka 5,10,544 from Rahmania tea garden, Taka 66,37,53 from Fatehbag tea garden, Taka 19,03,312 from Shahbajpur tea garden, and Taka 22,8,221 from Hafiza tea garden. Tea gardens from Baralekha thana is in the top of default list of land revenue.

It is alleged that any action to realise these huge amount of land revenue from tea gardens is yet to be taken by the revenue authority as owners of default tea gardens have good relations with the officials of the concerned ministry. As a result unpaid amount of land revenue has been increased by adding interest.

There are 90 tea gardens of different sizes in Moulvibazar district including foreign owners.

It is learnt from a source of the district revenue department that they had fixed the collection target of land development revenue from tea garden areas amounting to Taka three crore 71 lakh 47 thousand for the year of 1997. But they had collected Taka one crore 58 lakh 79 thousand 411 against the target and rate of collection was 53.51 per cent. It was 43.44 per cent in 1996. At this stage, Taka

23,5,037 Rajgarabad tea garden, Taka 46,9,902 from Dilkul tea garden, Taka 44,9,633 from Rehana tea garden and Taka 26,6,112 from Sirajnagar tea garden.

There are 10 tea gardens in Rajnagar thana. Land revenue has remained arrear to almost all tea gardens of this thana. Of them Taka 9,31,000 due from Shakara tea garden.

The source said that the district revenue department had sent a file to the ministry seeking permission for certificate cases against 30 default tea garden authorities. But the ministry is playing silent role in this regard.

The source added that in every three years, certificate cases has been started against the default tea gardens to realise land revenue. But it failed to make any fruitful result.

The source, however, said, some native and foreign owned tea gardens under Kamalgonj and Srimongal thanas are realizing their land revenue on regular basis. But other gardens are showing less interest to pay land revenue.



JHENIDAH: This female fishing cat was beaten to death by people at village Pukuria under Kaliganj thana on January 23.

28 killed in Meherpur last year

From Our Correspondent

MEHERPUR, Jan 27: A total of 29 murders were committed in Meherpur district during 1997 while hundreds of theft, dacoity, hijacking abduction, rape, women and children repression took place during the period of one year.

In 1996, 43 murders were committed. Of the 28 murders 20 were male and 9 were women. In Meherpur sadar thana 20 persons were murdered, of them 15 are male while 5 were women. In Gangni thana total murders were 9, of them 5 were male and 4 were female. The first murder started in January with the killing of Amjad in village Bhabanipur of the sadar thana in the hands of terrorists. Amjad was taken from a tea-stall and was killed by tying a rope in his neck.

On January 15, Jesmin a housewife of village Anyhupi under sadar thana was killed in matters of dowry. On February 5 a young person Lito by name was killed in the hands of terrorists. On February 6 Jostna a housewife of village Komarpur under sadar thana was killed when her husband threw acid on her body.

On February 12 Tanjer Ali of village Kholapara was killed by their rivals in connection with past enmity. On March 6 miscreants picked up Sajeda, a housewife from her bed in village Kathapota of sadar thana and after rape she was strangled to death. On March 7 Tokkel Ali of Bamundi union under Gangni thana was killed brutally by an influential group. On March 26 Abdus Salam, a member of terrorists group was beaten to death by his associates when they failed to come to a solution of dividing their booty.

On April 21 one housewife of

village Amtail of Gangni thana was killed when her father failed to pay dowry. On April 22 one Mahtab Ali was chopped to death in village Chakshamnagar under sadar thana by his rivals. On June 6 Amjad a college student of Meherpur town was stabbed to death by his classmate. On June 11 Masud Ali of Dhaia village under Gangni thana was killed in an armed clash by his rivals in broad daylight. On June 15 one young boy of village Daulatpur of sadar thana was killed mysteriously when he went to cut grass in the field.

On June 20 Selina of Mathmura village under Gangni thana was picked up by armed miscreants and raped her whole

night and later she was killed and left in the field. On the same night Mariam of village Dhankhola under Gangni thana was killed by her husband on dowry ground. On July 20, Abdul Ghani and Sharifuddin of village Kola under sadar thana were killed by gun fire when they were coming in a procession. On July 28, Kayemuddin, an old man of village Chowgacha was killed in the hands of terrorists.

On August 8, Abdul Jalil and Nur Islam of village Mahajanpur under sadar thana were shot dead by the terrorists in broad daylight. On August 20, Ashrafur a school student was killed in connection with an altercation centering a play ground.

On September 7, Mohammad was killed in the hands of terrorists of village Chandpur under Gangni thana. On September 12, Abdul Jalil of village Chandpur was shot dead by dacoits when he proceeded to prevent the dacoits from committing dacoity. On September 21, Mizanur Rahman Dalu was killed in Dighirpara at the outskirts of the town by armed attack of his rival in retaliation of past enmity.

On October 6, mother Jahana Begum was killed in the hands of her son brutally in village Sonali under sadar thana.

On October 7, one Israfil of village Anandab was beaten to death. On November 2, one unidentified young man was beaten to death in the hands of people suspecting him to be of member of terrorists group in village Pirojpur.

On December 20, with the murder of Rahima of cluster village of Rajpur under sadar thana, murder during the year 1997 ended.

17 shops gutted at Tangail

From Our Correspondent

TANGAIL, Jan 27: At least 17 shops were completely gutted in a fire at Park Bazar in Tangail town on Saturday night.

The fire originated from an oven of a hotel at about 11 pm soon engulfed the adjacent shops. Seventeen shops were gutted completely and 11 others partially, fire brigade sources said.

Firefighters extinguished the blaze after an hour.

The extent of damage was estimated at Tk 22 lakh, shopkeepers and fire brigade source said.

Cold spell claims 8 in Moulvibazar

From Our Correspondent

MOULVIBAZAR, Jan 27: Severe cold spell claimed eight lives in Moulvibazar district during last two weeks.

According to local people, Abdul Malik, 50, of Birantala village under Kulaura thana died from cold on the night of January 6. On January 5, Md Raja Miah, 57, of Tilagang village under Kamalgonj thana died at night. Azad Miah, 30, of village Faridpur under Rajnagar thana died recently.

Besides this, Aamjan Ullah, 50, of village Aganshi under Moulvibazar Sadar thana died on January 12. On the same day, Aditya Namasudra, 55, of the same village died. One Ameer Ullah, 50, a fruit trader of Moulvibazar town also died.

In another report received here said, two unidentified people died recently at Kulaura Railway station and Kulaura Mosque area due to cold spell.

Meanwhile, the rootless and poor people of slum areas of the district urged the administration to donate warm clothes to save them from shivering cold.

4,000 PWD workers yet to be regularised

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 27: More than 4,000 officials and workers of Public Works Department (PWD) are not getting Eid bonus this year too.

According to sources, these workers including Sub Assistant Engineers, have been working in the divisional and district offices of PWD for more than 14 years on master roll basis. They have not been regularised as per rule. But they have been conducting many important works in the field level.

These master roll workers do not get leave or festival bonuses, though some other colleagues, of them enjoy leave and bonuses, performing same duties and bearing the same responsibilities.

The question of regularisation of these officers and workers has been raised several times before the concerned authorities who have given repeated commitment but they have not been regularised yet.

Terrorist held at Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 27: Kotwali police arrested a terrorist named Abdul Kader from Misturpara of the town on Sunday.

Police said the terrorist, who is the king leader of 'Kaderia Bahini', was wanted in many cases, including murder, dacoity and rape.

Businessman robbed in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 27: Armed muggers snatched away cash amount of Taka three and a half lakh from a foreign currency dealer in day light on January 22.

A group of five to six muggers armed with deadly weapons including revolvers on a microbus stood on way of the businessman who was on his way to the Sonali Bank Foreign Exchange Branch from his residence at about 10-30 AM at Mirbakpota area.

The muggers stabbed him severely and snatched away a cash amount of Taka three and a half lakh from his possession at revolver-point.

The victim was rushed to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

Kotwali police failed to give any information about the matter.

Mother's appeal to rescue kidnapped daughter

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Jan 27: A mother in a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina recently appealed for rescuing her kidnapped daughter who could not be rescued after 30 days of her kidnapping.

Banani Talukddar, an office assistant of the Deputy Commissioner's office at Natore, whose 14 years old daughter Borna Talukddar, a SSC examinee, was kidnapped from her private tutor, Biman Chandra's house at Lalbazan in the town, allegedly by a notorious terrorist last month. Mother of the poor girl also appealed to the PM for arrest of Jubo-League worker Varat, the alleged kidnapper.

She told The Daily Star that Varat, an alleged accused of many cases, with his five com-

panions, dragged Borna from her private tutor's house. They took her away in daylight on December 28 through a microbus.

A case was filed with sadar thana police in this connection. Later on January 7, Banani Talukddar appealed to Home Minister Raiquul Islam. Following the minister's order, local police arrested two persons in the same night one of them was Pranab, driver of the microbus which was used during the kidnap and the other was Lipton, a companion of Varat.

The mother also said that police could neither trace her daughter nor the kidnapper. But, she alleged that the accomplices of Varat were threatening her to withdraw the case against them.

Pabna Newsletter

From Our Correspondent

Bus dacoity

PABNA, Jan 27: A dacoity was committed over a passenger bus on January 3 over Pabna-Ishurdi highways early in the morning.

The armed dacoits, in the guise of passengers, sat on the bus. When the bus reached near Dhulit they attacked the passengers. The passengers raised hue and cry and on hearing this, local people rushed to the spot. The dacoits then fled away but one of them was caught by the people, severely assaulted and then forwarded to Ishurdi thana.

Another dacoity was committed by an armed gang over Pabna-Nagorbari highway over a tempo carrying passengers.

The dacoits robbed the passengers of about Tk 2,800.

The passengers were all petty traders.

School student kidnapped

Shamima Parveen Jolly, 12, a student of Class VII of Pabna Government Girls' High School was kidnapped on December 17 while going to school but could not be recovered by the Police although a case was filed by her guardians.

Jolly was abducted from Sagarika area — not far off from her house. Her father Sajjad Hossain Bachchu alleged that she was abducted on gun-point. The abductors demanded ransom of Tk one lakh from him.

One of the accused in the case, Mamun was caught by the neighbours and handed over to Pabna thana, but for mysterious reasons, he was released from the thana subsequently, told the father of Jolly.

No other accused person was arrested as yet.

3 commit suicide

Three cases of suicide have been recorded in Chatmohor and Athgharia thanas recently.

On December 29, Mohabbat Ali, 70, of village Ankutia under Coatmohor committed suicide allegedly by hanging himself with a rope.

He was reportedly suffering from acute diseases since long. Besides, Shefali Khatun, 25, wife of Solaiman of village Sonakandar under Athgharia thana allegedly committed suicide by taking insecticides being unable to bear pains in her abdomen on December 25. On the other hand, one Raisuddin, 18, son of late Bharas Molla of village Kachugari under Chatmohar thana committed suicide allegedly by taking poison. He was suffering from mental diseases, it is learnt.

Young man robbed

One Haider, 30, son of Habibur Rahman of Jubileetankpota of Pabna town was brought down by a gang of armed youngsters from a running rickshaw from Kadamtala road near Government Commercial College, Pabna on December 30 and was robbed of Tk 2,500, one warm shawl and a wrist-watch from his possession the same evening on gun point.

None has been arrested in the connection as yet.

Bumper production of papaya expected

The Agriculture Extension Department of Pabna is expecting a bumper production of papaya in different thanas of Pabna district during the current year. The Department, with the above purpose, have imparted training to the cultivators so that they could effectively use modern methods of papaya cultivation.

According to an official of the Department, papaya has been cultivated on about 12,000 acres of land in all the nine thanas of the district. The number of papaya gardens has also been increasing, it was

stated.

The source disclosed that already some cultivators have been able to earn a sum of Tk 40 lakhs to 50 lakhs annually through papaya production and this has further attracted the general cultivators in producing the crop.

By using modern methods, one cultivator Abdul Majid said, they were getting higher yields of papaya nowadays.

Kidnapped girl rescued

A 12-year-old girl of Narayan Chandra Saha of village Char Tarapur under Pabna sadar thana, kidnapped on November 14 at night, was rescued from the house of Rahim Khan of the same village on December 24 by Pabna Police.

Earlier, a case filed with the Pabna thana by the uncle of the girl, Naba Kumar Saha.

The girl, Laksmi Rani Saha was put under safe custody. Two accused persons were also arrested.

5 drug addicts arrested

Five drug addicts have recently been arrested by the Police by conducting a raid on January 2 in Sadhupara area of Pabna town.

The arrested persons are: Mohammad Hanif, son of Morteuddin Sheikh of Sadhupara, Sujon, son of Abdul Jobbar, Ali Reza, son of late Shamsur Ali, Badsha, son of late Talem Sheikh and Shimul, son of Jaimul Abedin of Kotcharipara, Pabna.

Special cases have been filed against all of them with Pabna Sadar thana.

Fish trader stabbed

Yar Ali Khan, 28, a fish trader and son of Tazem Pramank of Ghospur was stabbed on January 3 in broad day light at about 1:30 pm by some armed miscreants near the house of the Superintendent of Police, Pabna.

The injured was immediately rushed to Pabna General Hospital but finding his injuries very grave, he was immediately rushed to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

A case has been lodged with Pabna thana in connection with the incident, but none was arrested as yet.

Workshop

A day-long workshop on coordination of Family Planning activities being conducted by the government and non-governmental organisations was held on December 29 in the Pabna office of the Bangladesh Family Planning Association.

Presided over by Mohammad Hasnatuzzaman, general secretary, Pabna unit of the FPAB, Advocate, Abdur Razzaq, President, Pabna District Advocates Bar Association, was the chief guest.

Those who participated in the discussions were: Abul Masud, Mohammed Zakaria, Dr Ram Dulal Bhowmik, Firoz Uddin Ahmad, Mohammad Alauddin and Civil Surgeon Dr Shamsuddin Mandal.

Cultural Festival concludes

The cultural week celebrated by the Edward College Students' Union ended on December 31. The functions were held in the Shaheed Abdus Sattar Miranayan of the college amidst great enthusiasm.

The programmes of the week included competitions, a four-day long, in Tagore's songs, Nazrul's songs, patriotic songs, Lalon geeti, Palli geeti, modern song, playing with guitar, recitation of English and Bengali poems, set speech, comic general knowledge, Shakila Sharmin won championship in the competitions.



MYMENSINGH: Study in progress at a primary school being run in the town by Gano Sahajyo Sangstha, a non-governmental organisation (NGO).