

**News snaps**

**Police students clash leaves 20 hurt**  
 NOAKHALI, Nov 16: A total of 20 people including two police personnel were injured in a clash between students and police over the arrest of a student leader at Sonaimuri of Begumganj thana here on Saturday, reports UNB.  
 Witnesses said a group of students allegedly led by Babu and Jashim went to enjoy film at Rabin Cinema Hall without ticket on Wednesday. While resisted by the hall authority they got furious and went on rampage at the hall. Later police arrested Babu in a raid at a local college campus on Saturday in this connection. On hearing the news of arrest, the students stormed the cinema hall again. Police, on information, rushed to the spot and the clash ensued leaving 20 people injured.

**Scarcity of drinking water**  
 LAXMIPUR, Nov 16: Acute scarcity of drinking water has been prevailing in three thanas here as 4,535 tube-wells went out of order due to the recent flood, reports UNB.  
 Various waterborne diseases have been spreading fast in the 44 affected unions and two municipalities of the district due to intake of contaminated pond and canal water. Official sources said 1,895 tube-wells in Ramganj, 2,097 in sadar and 543 in Ramganj thanas went out of order due to the prolonged flood. A source, however, claimed that most of the affected tube-wells had been damaged well ahead of flood. Moreover, some tube-wells are out of use due to arsenic contamination. No step had earlier been taken to repair these affected tube-wells.

**Books distributed free of cost**  
 KISHOREGANJ, Nov 16: A total of 2,55,329 sets of new books have been sanctioned for the primary students of 13 thanas of the district free of cost under the government's Universal Primary Education programme for the next academic year, reports UNB.  
 Of the books, 65,602 sets were allocated for class one, 57,838 sets for class two, 51,680 sets for class three, 44,977 sets for class three, 44,977 sets for class four and 35,232 sets for class five. District Primary Education Officer Mohammad Rezauddin Sarker told, that the books to be distributed by local primary education department, will be given from the first week of January, 1999.

**Allotment of wheat postponed**  
 FENI, Nov 16: Some 30,000 poor primary students in the district are facing difficulties in prosecuting their studies due to stoppage of wheat under Food For Education programme, reports UNB.  
 According to official sources, 187 primary schools of 15 unions in five thanas were brought under the programme in 1993 and some 27,293 single child families and 1,177 more than a child families were getting benefit. Each single child family was receiving 15 kgs and more than a child family 20 kgs of wheat per month. The postponement of allocation of wheat for the last three months has created an adverse situation. Headmasters of many primary schools expressed the apprehension that if the wheat distribution project is not resumed immediately, the alarming dropout rate will jeopardise the universal primary education programme in the district.

**Call to conduct relief drive properly**  
 HABIGANJ, Nov 16: A joint meeting of district disaster management committee and market advisory committee was held at the district administration's conference room on Wednesday, reports BSS.  
 Ahmed Fazlur Rashid, Deputy Commissioner and president of Disaster Management Committee presided over the meeting, which was attended by political leaders, businessmen, officials and journalists. The meeting discussed about different post-flood disaster management activities and price position of essential commodities. The meeting urged the relevant authorities to conduct the relief and rehabilitation works properly and to remain alert against any irregularities in the distribution of VGF car and house building grant.

**Agri loan for farmers**  
 MANIKGANJ, Nov 16: Krishi Bank and three other commercial banks will disburse Taka 22,17,56,000 as agriculture loan among the farmers in Manikganj district under the post-flood rehabilitation programme of the government, reports BSS.  
 Bangladesh Krishi Bank will disburse Taka 13,50 crore. The bank has already disbursed Taka five crore among the farmers. The rest amount will be disbursed by Sonali Bank, Agrani Bank and Janata Bank. These banks have already started disbursement of loans.

**PM's relief for repairing houses**  
 MADARIPUR, Nov 16: The district administration has received Tk 10 lakh from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the repair of houses damaged by the recent floods, reports APB.  
 The entire amount will be distributed among 2,000 flood stricken families, with each family getting Tk 500. All the four thanas and three pourashavas of the district had been badly affected by the floods which left 1.5 lakh dwelling houses damaged. Local people have urged the government to allocate more money for reconstruction of their damaged houses.

**Incidents of highway robbery on rise**  
 NARAIL, Nov 16: The incidents of highway robbery in the south-western region of the country including Narail has increased alarmingly creating panic among the people, reports UNB.  
 The passenger night coaches and trucks carrying different goods are being looted by the robbers at random due to lack of adequate security measures on the road. The number of robbery during the last seven months is over 150, said police sources adding that eight people were killed during the period. Over a hundred people including passengers, transport owners, drivers and workers have sustained injuries in these attacks. Besides, the robbers decamped with valuables worth over crores of taka. The movement of passengers and goods during the night on the highways in the region have become risky.

**Prospect of winter farming bright**  
 NARSINGDI, Nov 16: Prospect of cultivation of early varieties of winter vegetables seems to be bright in the district, agriculture experts said, reports APB.  
 The early vegetables include tomato, cauliflower, cabbage, potato, brinjal, radish, spinach, bean and pumpkin. This is perhaps for the first time that cultivators have undertaken early cultivation of tomatoes, local people said, adding, these varieties can also be cultivated in summer. Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) has developed two varieties of tomatoes, named BARI Tomato-4 and BARI Tomato-5.

**Rajshahi dwellers deprived of amenities**  
 RAJSHAHI, Nov 16: Even after 10 years of upgradation of Rajshahi Municipality to City Corporation, the city people of many newly-extended wards are plagued with manifold problems in the absence of basic amenities, reports UNB.  
 Lack of smooth water-supply, bad condition of roads, erratic power supply and inadequate sewerage system made the life miserable. The City Corporation established in 1988 has now extended 35-square-kilometre area from its earlier 20-square-km and the wards stood at 30 against the earlier 16. The electric supply authority said problems like manpower shortage and want of electric poles have been hindering the work of power supply in these areas. They said extra 20 megawatt power is needed to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply in many town areas.

**Law and order worsens**  
 KHAGRACHHARI, Nov 16: The law and order situation in the town area here has deteriorated as the toll collection, mugging and terrorist activities are going on unabated, reports UNB.  
 According to local people, a group of tribal miscreants are engaged in looting the belongings of people by intercepting truck, jeep, bus and rickshaws at Khejur Bagan, Swanirvar Khabangpuria, Zeromali and Alutia Kirshi Gabeshana Kendra at gun point in broad-day light. Besides, the misguided youths creating obstacles to certain points of Dighinala road, Derachara Giriful of Jamatali-Panchari road, Mahaichhari road, Takurchhara and Bijitala areas and loot the vehicles and passengers at random. The situation turns worse after sundown. The incidents of crimes have increased following the decrease of police drive against the miscreants, the dwellers said.

**Relief drive progressing**  
 NETRAKONA, Nov 16: The post-flood relief and rehabilitation programmes are progressing fast in all 10 thanas and four pourashavas here, reports UNB.  
 Official sources said government has allocated Tk 24.71 lakh for the rehabilitation programme in the district. The district administration has finalised 93,000 VGF cards for distribution in 85 unions and four pourashavas here. Some 17,000 cards have also been distributed earlier. Meanwhile, government has also sanctioned money for purchasing seedlings, seeds, fertilizers and other necessary agriculture inputs among the flood affected farmers of the district. Besides, all the commercial banks, Bangladesh Krishi Bank and different NGOs have also started distribution of agri-loan among the farmers to boost production.



JHENIDAH: Child labour is on rise throughout the district. Photo shows some child labourers (Left): Sujan, a canteen worker at a tea stall (Middle) Didar, a salesman at a cloth trader's shop and (Right): Pikul, a van puller on Saikupa-Garaganj road.

**Child labour on alarming rise in Jhenidah dist**

From Delwar Kabir  
 JHENIDAH, Nov 16: The number of child labourers has been increasing alarmingly in the district. At least 20 thousand child labourers are engaged in various types of works in six thanas of the district.  
 The children who are aged between 7 and 14 years are working as rickshaw puller, day labourer in agricultural fields, hotel and restaurant boys, tea stall worker, brick breaking worker, polythene bag seller and salesmanship in shops.  
 There is no record in government offices about the actual number of child labourers in the district. Roughly the number may be 20 thousand, though child labour has been banned world-wide as per United Nation declaration.  
 Sujan, 12, of village Habibpur in Saikupa thana has been working as a tea stall worker at a stall adjacent to Saikupa bridge. He has been drawing an amount of Taka 250 per month as salary for his labour which starts at 9 in the morning and continues till 12 midnight every day.  
 Sujan's father Ukil Uddin is a farmer who could not send his three sons to school for education due to abject poverty. As a result Sujan has been engaged in child labour from his very boyhood.  
 Pikul, another boy aged about 11 is engaged in pulling rickshaw van on Saikupa-Garaganj road. His father Mostafa is a very poor farmer at village Jhaudia in the same thana. Pikul's are three brothers and one sister. Their father is now in financial crisis. He could not provide education for his children. After only one year in school, Pikul was forced to leave school and he was given a van to pull on. Now Pikul earns an amount of Taka 30 to 40 every day. He hands over the money to his father. No family members have gone to school, Pikul said.  
 Another day labourer is Didar Bakhs alias Didar. He is very popular among people of Saikupa town as a good salesman of garments goods at a cloth trader's shop. Didar left school two years ago when he was a student of class four in a local government primary school. He was compelled to leave the school as his father could not provide the cost of his education. Now he is about 11 years old. Toajuddin, father of Didar is a rickshaw puller at village Kabirpur.  
 When contacted with Toajuddin, he said that he was not in a position to provide education for their children due to abject poverty. Finding no other alternative he has sent his child to work place leaving the educational institutions. Now Didar has been serving at Century Garments at Kabirpur stand in Saikupa town without any salary or remuneration. He is an apprentice there, said Didar's father.  
 When asked Toajuddin said that he was not aware about the rights of children as per United Nation declaration.

**40,000 hectares to be brought under winter crops farming scheme in 11 S dists**

From Staff Correspondent  
 BARISAL, Nov 16: Agriculture Extension Department (AED) has undertaken a programme for cultivation of the winter vegetables in 11 southern districts with a view to overcoming the loss sustained due to recent deluge.  
 According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED) here, nearly 40 thousand hectares of land will be brought under this programme in the districts. The target of production has been fixed at five lakh 90 thousand metric tons of different types of vegetables.  
 District-wise break-up of cultivation is as follows: Barisal-4,300 hectares, in Pirojpur 3,800 hectares, in Jhalakati-2,350 hectares, in Bhola-4,400 hectares, in Patuakhali-3,600 hectares, in Bargunata-3,200 hectares, in Rajbari-3,100 hectares, in Faridpur-4,000 hectares, in Gopalganj-3,200 hectares, in Madaripur-4,600 hectares and in Saratpur-4,600 hectares of land.  
 Besides, farmers will be given agricultural loan with easy terms and conditions.  
 They will also be provided with money, seeds, fertilisers and pesticides including other agri-inputs under the Post-flood Rehabilitation Programme in the districts under Barisal Division and greater Faridpur.  
 Official sources said, the interested farmers will also be given necessary training related to agro-based production.



PABNA: Speakers at a condolence meeting which was held recently at Banamali Institute here to pay tributes to great freedom fighter and former Deputy Commissioner of Pabna late Nurul Kader Khan (L-R) Mahbubur Rahman, DC, Pabna, Prof Anisuzzaman of Dhaka University, Air Vice-Marshal (ret'd) A K Khondker, Begum Rokeya Kader, H T Imam (former Cabinet Secretary and freedom fighter), Omar Kader Jitu (son of late Nurul Kader) and Ranesh Maitra. — Star photo.

**Rich tributes paid to Nurul Kader Khan**

From Our Correspondent  
 PABNA, Nov 16: Rich tributes were paid to Nurul Kader Khan, a former Deputy Commissioner of Pabna who led the heroic armed struggle against the Occupation Pakistani army for three days from March 27 to March 29 in 1971.  
 The tributes were paid at a condolence meeting arranged in the local Banamali Institute on Wednesday last.  
 Presided over by Mahbubur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner, Pabna who is also a freedom fighter, the meeting was addressed, among others, by eminent intellectual Dr Anisuzzaman, Air Vice-Marshal (Ret'd) A K Khondker, former cabinet secretary H T Imam, Begum Nurul Kader, Omar Kader Khan Jitu (son of Nurul Kader Khan), Waziuddin Khan MP, Begum Jannatul Ferdous MP, Advocate Abdur Razzaq, President Pabna District Advocates' Bar Association, Mirza Shamsul Islam, President, Pabna Press Club, Advocate Ranesh Maitra, Convener of the Preparatory committee formed for organising the citizens' condolence meeting, Leaders of Awami League, Gano Forum, Ganotantri Party, CPB and representatives from all walks of life.  
 The function ended with a session of patriotic songs.

**Tragic**  
 NOAKHALI, Nov 16: A 12-year old schoolboy of Kamdevpur village in Begumganj thana died when his wearing shirt caught fire from his gas light on Thursday, reports UNB.

**Outlawed party member killed in gunfight**  
 From Staff Correspondent  
 KHULNA, Nov 16: A leader of an outlawed party was shot dead in a gunfight between two outlawed parties at midnight Saturday at village Choghoria under Dumuria thana.  
 Police said Mizanur Rahman Forman, 32, leader of the 'zonal committee' of the outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) was shot dead during a clash with rival activists of Biplobi Communist Party (BCP). At least 16 others were also hit by bullets during the clash, they added.  
 The bullet-riddled body of Forman was recovered from a fish enclosure.  
 Police believe the killing of the PBCP leader may be the backlash of the murder of Ali Reza, a member of the BCP on November 12 at Sholigata village under the same thana.

**One drowns, 7 missing as trawler sinks in Meghna**

From Staff Correspondent  
 BARISAL, Nov 16: One person drowned and seven others were missing when a passenger trawler capsized in the river Meghna in Bhola at about 10 am recently.  
 According to police and witnesses, the trawler with more than 100 passengers aboard sank amid strong current while it was going to Char Zahuruddin under Tamijuddin thana of the district.  
 A group of 13 armed policemen were among the passengers. They were transferred to Char Zahuruddin police camp from Mirzakalu.

**10 districts have turned into dens of smugglers**

PABNA, Nov 16: The bordering areas of the country's northern districts have turned out to be dens of smugglers of different commodities, even including human blood, reports APB.  
 The districts are: Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon, Joypurhat, Bogra, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Naogaon, Kurigram, Panchagarh and Dinajpur.  
 Much to the surprise of the locals, throbbing markets of smuggled goods had also sprung up in the frontiers, according to competent local sources. Some such markets had grown up at Badarganj in Rangpur and Domar in Nilphamari districts.  
 Even bags containing blood of different groups were also being smuggled into the country through the border areas of Rangpur.  
 It was also alleged that this blood was being transfused into the body of patients, notwithstanding their proper reservation. The blood smugglers have been operating at various clinics and hospitals on the other side of the border.  
 Apart from blood, sugar, edible salt, clothes, gold ornaments, food items and cosmetics were also being smuggled through these points into the country.  
 People involved in smuggling of these items were learnt to have been connected with international gangs indulged in narcotics business and 'hundi' business.  
 Such routes are: Dinajpur, Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Hill, Hakimpur, Chirampur, Ghoraghat, Akkelpur, Kalai, Chilahati, Burimari, Kaziganj, Patgram, Moghulhat, Atwari, Tetulia, Boda and bordering areas of Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj districts.  
 It was learnt that women were also involved in these smuggling operations, who move by rickshaw vans along with smuggled goods.  
 These goods were brought to different areas on board railway trains, which were often stopped at unauthorised places on their routes for lifting and dropping the items. Even security personnel, including policemen, were allegedly involved in these activities. Stopping of trains at the unauthorised places is overlooked for reason best known to them.



MAGURA: The huge gate which was built on the occasion of Kattiyani Puja of the Hindu community. The Puja was celebrated here recently with due religious fervour.

**God fathers have set up phensidyl factories in Natore dist**

NATORE, Nov 16: God fathers have allegedly set up factories for producing phensidyl in the district to meet the increasing demand for the contraband by drug addicts, reports APB.  
 Despite that fact, local sources said, the contraband phensidyl continued to be smuggled into the country as the number of addicts had gone up by dangerous proportions.  
 Some more phensidyl-producing factories had been set up in other northern districts.  
 Fake stout manufacturers are allegedly using raw materials of country-liquor and mixing it with phensidyl brought in from across the border. This is the local variety of phensidyl syrup rampantly taken by the addicts.  
 These bottles of fake phensidyl are selling well, because they are a little cheaper compared to the ones smuggled from India, said a drug trader here.  
 The manufacturers were printing the labels from different press in Bogra and sticking them on the bottles. Thereafter, they were sealing the corks by machine and selling those as Indian phensidyl.  
 Both the local and the Indian phensidyl were sent to different parts of the country from here mainly by microbus and private cars in the dark of night.  
 By taking the fake drug, many of the addicts are losing their mental balance on and on, said Belal Hossain, a physician in the town.  
 He said they would go mad fully at one stage if they continued to take this contaminated drug for years.  
 Local people urged the authorities concerned for taking appropriate steps to curb production and smuggling of phensidyl in the greater interest of the people, specially the young generation.

**Two shot dead, then slaughtered in Chuadanga**

CHUADANGA, Nov 16: A group of outlawed extremists shot dead and then slaughtered two men at Belgachi village in Alamdanga thana here on Saturday night, reports UNB.  
 Police said the assailants entered an abandoned house at dead of night on Saturday murdered Rezaul, 30, son of Rajab Uddin and Mizan, 35, son of Riaz. The victims of the village were sleeping at the house. The killers first shot them dead and slaughtered later.  
 Previous enmity was said to be the reason behind the murder.  
 A case was filed in this connection. Twenty people were murdered in the district in the last month. Meanwhile, police in a special drive arrested 31 people from different areas.



BARISAL: Barisal NGO Development Network comprising of 10 non-governmental organisations of the southern districts recently distributed relief goods among the flood victims of Hizla, Mehendiganj and other flood affected areas. — Star photo

**Storm damages 600 houses in Sirajganj**

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 16: More than 600 kutchha houses were damaged and many trees uprooted when a storm swept across the district on Tuesday evening, reports APB.  
 Official and unofficial sources said that the storm that lashed for 20 minutes affected several villages in Ullapara, Tarash and Faridpur thanas.

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Syedur Rahman greeting the sons and daughters of the university teachers, officers and employees who scored brilliant results in the Higher Secondary Certificate examination at a function arranged recently at Rajshahi University Ladies Club. — Star photo