

## News snaps

### Abductor gets life-term

PATUAKHALI, Dec 8: A court here on Monday sentenced a young man to life term rigorous imprisonment for abducting a schoolgirl, reports UNB.

According to the prosecution, accused Ripon Farazi, 25, of village Auliapur in Dasmina thana abducted Sushila Rani, a class VI student on April 23, 1997, and reportedly married her converting to Islam. Police caught the couple from Dhaka upon a complaint by the mother of Sushila against nine including Ripon. District and Sessions Judge of Special Court M Shakhawat Hossain Bahar after examining the records and witnesses awarded the punishment acquitting others.

### Youth festival at Madaripur

MADARIPUR, Dec 8: The National Youth Festival '98 was observed here on Tuesday, reports BSS.

Madaripur Youth Development Directorate chalked out different programmes including rally, discussion, cultural function and distribution of saplings on this occasion. A special police drive against the outlaws in southern districts on Monday, reports UNB.

### Fisherman succumbs to injuries

CHUADANGA, Dec 8: A fisherman of Hadukandi village of Alamdanga thana, who received fatal stab injuries on Monday evening, succumbed to his wounds in the early hours Tuesday, reports APB.

The victim was identified as Firoz, 30, son of Muslim Uddin Malita of the village. Police and villagers said Firoz was grievously injured when a group of hoodlums stabbed him mercilessly in a field near the Hadukandi village at about 8:30 pm Monday night. On hearing the cry of Firoz villagers rushed there and took him to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at about 2 am.

### 3 killed by armed extremists

CHUADANGA, Dec 8: Three people were killed allegedly by armed extremists in separate attacks on the first day of a special police drive against the outlaws in southern districts on Monday, reports UNB.

Sources said a gang of gunmen led by a woman cadre of an outlawed party took away Firoz, 27, son of Moslem Malitha of Harokandi village of Alamdanga thana of this district, from his house at gunpoint and shot him dead after slaughtering at a nearby baor at the dead of night. Police said armed terrorists kidnapped Moniruzzaman Badal, 28, son of Shafuddin of Malhad village of the same thana, while doing his contractual works and shot and slaughtered him at a nearby bridge. Meanwhile, Hafizur Rahman, 32, Imam of Allang village mosque in Gangni thana of Meherpur district, was murdered by slaughtering in the mosque's verandah by armed brigands.

### 29 activists of Mohila Dal hurt

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 8: At least 29 activists of pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal were injured in an attack at SS Road in the town on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said they came under attack by 'Awami League' activists when they were on a procession protesting the arrest of 22 leaders and workers of BNP, including Poursheva Chairaman Noor-e-Alam Helal. The attackers reportedly stripped 10 women during the melee. On information, police rushed to the spot and controlled the situation lobbing tear gas shells. Later, BNP activists brought out another procession in the town protesting the attack and police picked up eight BNP men from the procession. Of the injured, Rokeya Helal, 35, Nani Bawa, 50, Aziz Khatun, 50, Joynab, 45, Rahitun Bawa, 70, Alo Khatun, 24, Lima Khatun, 22, Rokeya Khatun, 22, Helena Khatun, 23, and Sabiha Khatun, 45, were hospitalised with serious wounds.

### Three pirates arrested

MONGLA, Dec 8: Mongla thana police arrested three pirates from Joimony, adjacent to Pashur river on Monday and recovered one foreign 2.2 rifle, one single barrel gun, one gun and 22 rounds of live cartridge from their possession, reports BSS.

Mongla police sources said, acting on a tip-off a team of police led by Officer-in-charge Rashidul Alam and Sub-Inspector Khondkar Mizanur Rahman cordoned off the hide-out of the pirates. Sensing the presence of police the criminals started firing. Police also reacted sharply by counter-firing. The pirates then tried to flee. Police arrested three pirates from the spot with their arms and ammunition, but three other pirates managed to escape.

### Head of new born child recovered

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 8: Head of a new born child was recovered by Sadar police from Raniganj area in the town on Monday evening, reports APB.

Hearing noise of dogs and foxes, petrol police rushed to the spot, project area of Hundi Company, and recovered the head but the rest of the body was eaten by the animals, police said. Seeing the nature of the cut mark, police suspected that the child was slaughtered but the body was eaten up by animals. The head was sent to Sirajganj Hospital morgue for autopsy. OC of Sirajganj Sadar thana Kamruzzaman filed a murder case but none could be arrested yet, police said.

### Farmers' training course concludes

JHALAKATI, Dec 8: A two-day women farmers' training course on food, nutrition and environment concluded here on Monday, reports APB.

Sixty women farmers from across the district were given training on vegetable cultivation in homesteads, pest control, preservation of vegetables and fruits, nutrition and environment protection. Deputy Director of the local AED Anwarul Alam inaugurated it while Kafiluddin and Jayedul were the instructors.

### 4 banks start agri-loan disbursement

MADARIPUR, Dec 8: Four banks have started a 24-crore taka agri-loan disbursement programme in the district but farmers allege they are being menaced by brokers, often losing a lion share of the loan, reports APB.

Sources say Bangladesh Krishi Bank will disburse Tk 16.93 crore, Janata Bank Tk 2.5 crore, Agrani Bank Tk 1.62 crore and Sonali Bank Tk 3.32 crore. Farmers say they feel quite insecure about the credit programme but brokers are taking advantage of their ignorance and illiteracy. They feel that the banks should increase the staff to speed up the disbursement and take steps so that they can deal directly with bank officials. They also suggested introduction of mobile courts.

### Animals being slaughtered openly

NETRAKONA, Dec 8: Meat sellers have been slaughtering animals in public places in and around markets in 10 thanas of the district due to lack of slaughter houses, creating health hazard, reports APB.

Local people allege that cows and goats are slaughtered even on government office premises. Consumers say they have to buy meat from a market because of lack of supervision by the officials concerned. Quality is never ensured. Butchers at the district headquarters, Purbodhala, Shaliganj, Hironpur, Kendua, Barhatta, Mohanganj slaughter animals by road-sides and sell meat at the same spot. This practice, local people say, has rendered the atmosphere quite unhygienic.

### 'Aman' output falls short of target

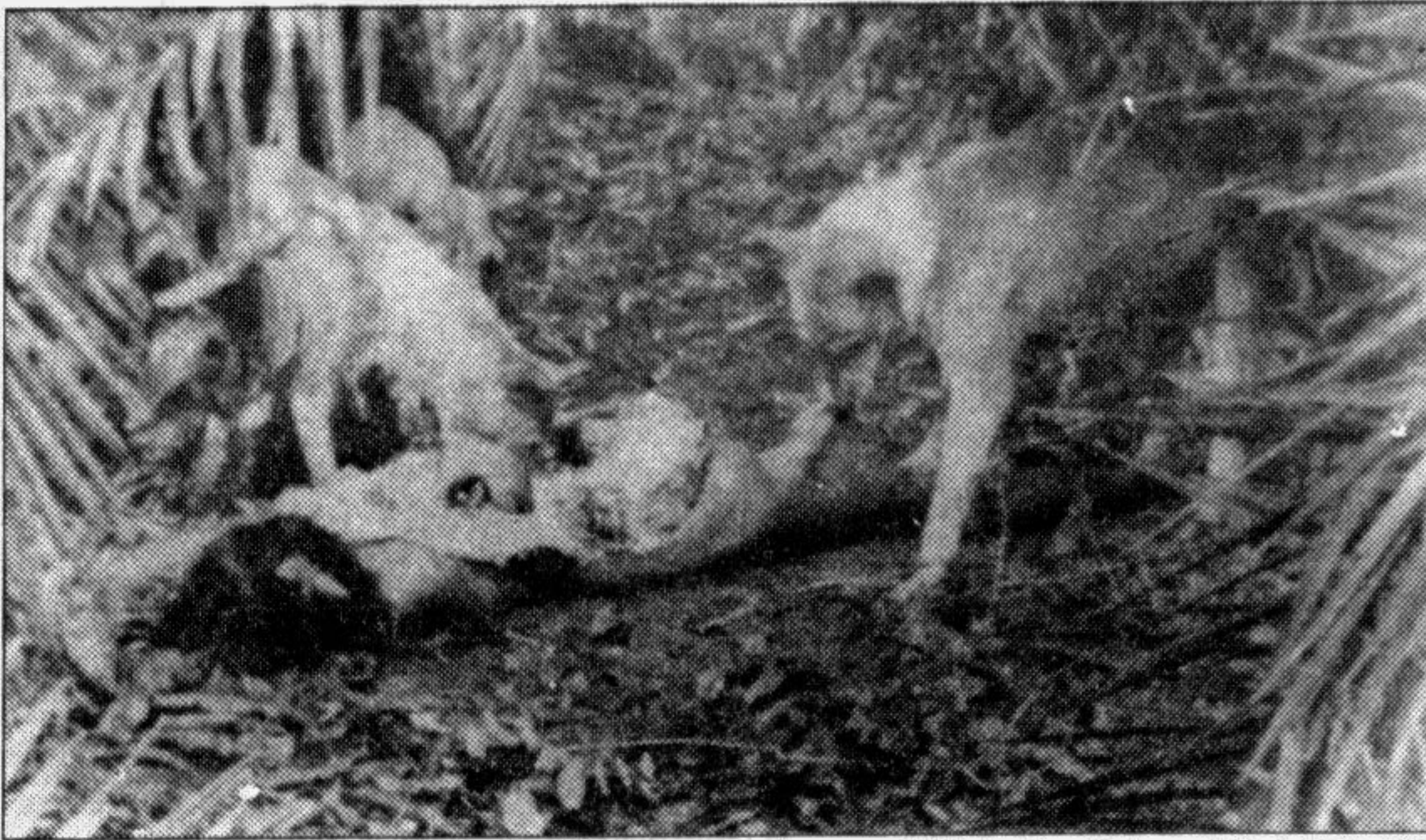
HABIGANJ, Dec 8: The production target of transplanted and broadcast 'Aman' could not be achieved in eight thanas of the district in the season due to pest-attack and flood damage, reports UNB.

Agriculture experts and farmers feared that the target of paddy production might fall by 40 per cent due to the damages. Cultivation target of transplanted 'Aman' was fixed at 54,878 hectares and broadcast 'Aman' at 32,150 hectares and the production targets were 1,06,800 and 35,365 metric tons respectively. Of these, cultivation target of transplanted 'Aman' was fixed at 10,670 hectares in Sadar, 11,465 hectares in Madhabpur, 13,727 hectares in Chunarughat, 8,995 hectares in Bahubal, 7,175 hectares in Nabiganj, 1,700 hectares in Lakhal, 935 hectares in Baniachang and 211 hectares in Azmiriganj thanas.

### Stipend distributed

HABIGANJ, Dec 8: A total of Tk 1.31 lakh has been distributed as stipend among 282 poor and meritorious students under the district's Chhunarughat Education Trust, reports UNB.

The stipends are being given to the meritorious students from class VII to masters degree of poor families every year. This year a function was held at the Thana Parishad auditorium recently. Divisional Commissioner of Sylhet Muhammad Habibur Rahman attended the function as chief guest. Deputy Commissioner Ahmed Fazlur Rasheed was also present as special guest. Among others, Trust Secretary Dr R Hossain, Thana Education Officer Abdul Qadir and meritorious student Sarwar Hossain Sujon who stood fourth in 1998 HSC examination spoke on the occasion.



JESSORE: Dogs eating the body of a woman who was killed after being violated by the Occupation Pakistan Army in the district town during our Liberation War in 1971.

— Star photo



JESSORE: Freedom fighters in action against the Occupation Pakistan Army near Jessore Cantonment.

— Star photo

# Jessore people heaved a sigh of relief on December 7 in '71

From Atiur Rahamn

JESSORE, Dec 8: People of Jessore celebrated December 7 as deliverance day.

On this day, during the Liberation War in 1971, this town was freed from the Occupation Pakistan Army without any resistance or bloodshed.

The predator-enemy forces retreated towards Khulna by vacating Jessore Cantonment on the previous night suddenly under the cover of darkness. It was indeed a surprise to all.

The valiant freedom fighters (FFs) and Allied forces, led by the Commander of Sector 8 Major Manzoor entered into the town early in morning. But they found the town abandoned. No human beings or any animate objects were on the streets. The entire area was deserted and desolate.

Only the buildings with blood-stained walls bearing marks of damages caused by bullets were standing.

Bodies and skeletons of men,

women and children were lying scattered all over the roads and lanes of the town. The scenario was dreadful.

The situation changed within hours. The whole town became crowded. They greeted the brave freedom fighters and the Allied forces. People welcomed them as heroes and saviours. People heaved a sigh of relief after long nine months. They received a new lease of life.

The scenario was changed when reports of genocide, violence, arson and plunder committed by the Occupation Pak Army began to pour in from different parts of the area. The day was marked by mixed feelings.

If may be mentioned here that the enemy forces took shelter at Fultala and Shironomi on way to Khulna after coming out of Jessore Cantonment. They attempted to reorganise themselves and tried to

recapture Jessore Cantonment. It took a fortnight for the joint command of freedom fighters and Allied Forces to advance towards Jessore Cantonment after the crushing defeat of the Occupation Pakistani Forces at Muktinagar battle on November 22.

They had to wait at Chougachha thana to get the green signal to march forward. Meanwhile, General Niazi rushed to Jessore and held a public meeting at the local stadium on December 4, only three days before the fall of Jessore.

According to witnesses, General Niazi in this meeting, made a clarion call to reorganise the Pakistanis with renewed spirit and courage against the FFS and mobilise public support to mop up the FFS.

Jessore Cantonment was heavily pounded by bombs and mortar shells from across the

border on November 22. The bombings continued till the In-Charge of Jessore Cantonment Brigadier Hyat Khan shifted the Pakistani headquarters to Khulna from Jessore.

Liberation of Jessore was very costly. It took the sacrifice of thousands of lives. People of Jessore were in the forefront right from the beginning of the Liberation War.

Earlier, the national flag of Bangladesh was hoisted atop Jessore Collectorate Building by a group of revolutionary students on March 3, 1971. Police opened fire on a militant procession on the day leaving one Charubala killed on the spot at Mikepatti in the town.

The next day the national flag was hoisted at the local Eidgah ground at the initiative of veteran six-point campaigner Syed Mohabbat Ali, journalist Mahmudul Haq, Saleha Khatun, Amal Sen, journalist Abdus Salam, valiant freedom

fighter Abdul Hai and others.

This group put up barricades at Atabpur at the entry point to Jessore Cantonment on March 17, killing one Pakistan Army soldier.

This incident inspired many to come forward and Jessore became the headline in the national dailies.

Advocate Moshirur Rahman, MP elect from Awami League, was arrested from his residence at dead of night on March 26. Later he was inhumanly tortured and killed inside Jessore Cantonment on April 24.

During the Liberation War the Occupation Pakistan Army killed noted social workers like Dr Obaidul Huq, Sudhir Babu, Narayan Shah and many others.

The Occupation Pakistan Army lost control over Jessore town and remained confined inside Jessore Cantonment fol-

lowing worsening of situation from March 29 onward.

The next day, Bengalee soldiers in Jessore Cantonment revolted. Lt Anwar was brutally killed in a face to face fight with the enemy.

Hundreds of supporters from Narail and neighbouring places flocked to Jessore. They opened the Jessore Central Jail and freed all political prisoners on March 31.

On April 4, the Occupation Pakistan Army came out of Jessore Cantonment and launched a massive operation in the town creating havoc by killing a number of innocent people.

Freedom fighters backed by the Allied forces liberated the Jessore western front in one day's fierce fighting at Muktinagar in Chougachha Upazila on November 22.

It was their first offensive and the next was the fall of Jessore Cantonment.

## Bamboo clusters being destroyed

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 8: Hundreds of bamboo clusters are being destroyed due to lack of proper nursing and plantation programme in 13 thanas of the district, reports UNB.

Experts said proper nursing enables a bamboo to sprout at least 30 to 40 tender plants in a year. But at present only four to eight plants are growing from a mature plant in one year in different areas of the district.

The reduction in the number is attributed to the indiscriminate felling of bamboo before attaining maturity for meeting the increasing demand.

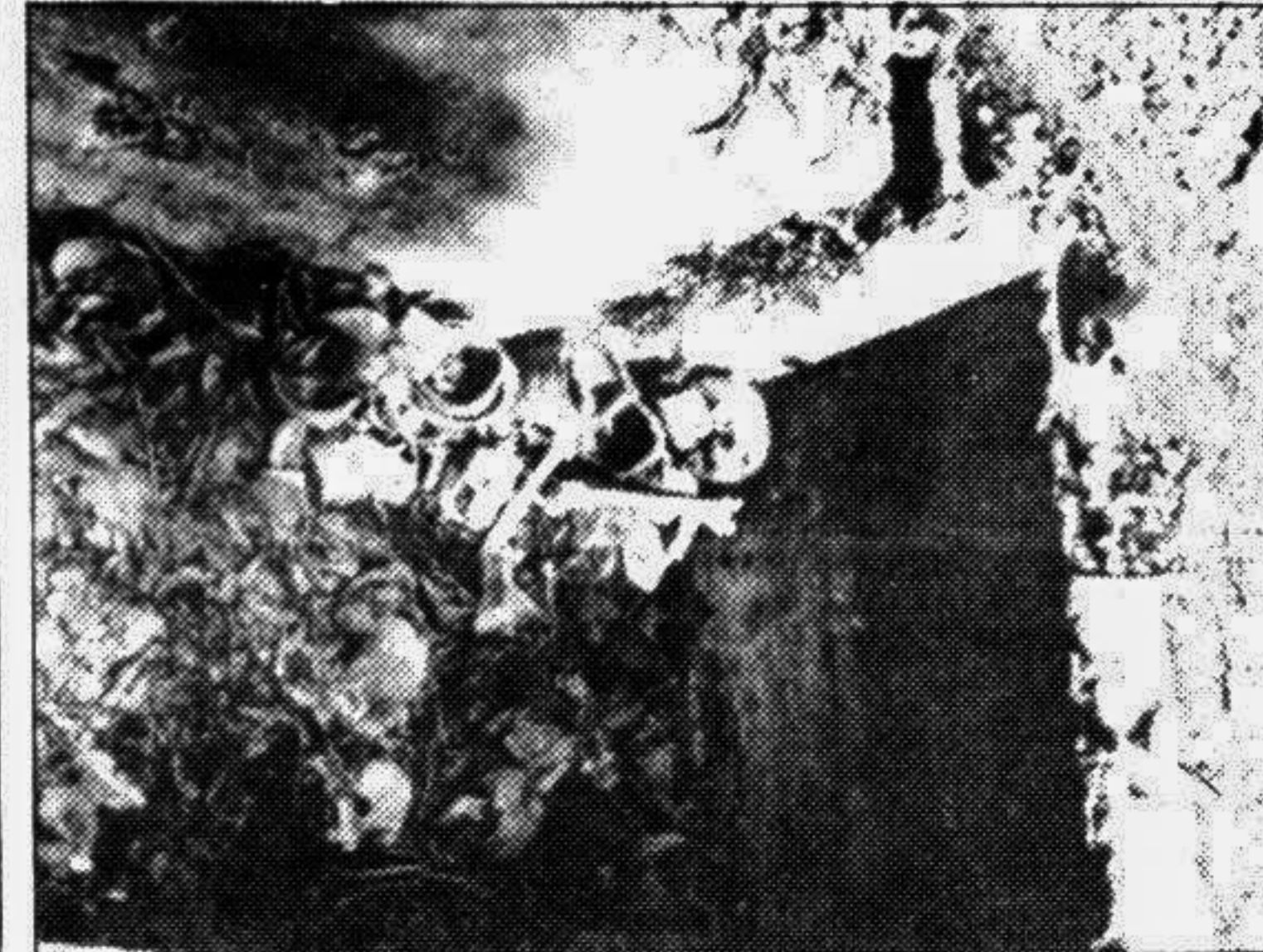
Bamboo is also being used as firewood in the rural areas as well as in the brick-fields. Moreover, local bamboo grow-

ers said tender bamboo plants are facing extinction due to unknown disease.

They said the production of bamboo is not increasing to meet the rising demand. It is widely being used in constructing thatched houses by the poor people and as raw materials in the bamboo-based cottage industries.

Over 90 per cent dwellings and other houses in the rural areas are kutcha and bamboo is the main house building material, said the local people.

Besides, according to a source, over 15,000 families of the district maintain their livelihood by producing and selling bamboo articles.



JESSORE: Heaps of skeletons of the martyrs who were killed by the Occupation Pakistan Army in the district town during our Liberation War in 1971.

— Star photo

## IRRI, 'Boro', wheat production may fall short of target

RAJSHAHI, Dec 8: Production target of IRRI, Boro paddy and wheat may not be achieved in the northern region due to acute shortage of seeds, reports UNB.

Local people alleged that a section of unscrupulous traders are selling the seeds at price beyond the reach of the poor and marginal farmers.

At present, per kg wheat seeds is being sold at Tk 19 while 'Boro' seeds at Tk 18 per kg.

But the traders refuting the allegation said the reason behind the seed scarcity is shortage of supply. Taking advantage of the situation, some dishonest

traders have enhanced the price to earn windfall profit, they added.

Meanwhile, the farmers alleged irregularities in distribution of seeds, provided by the government to recoup the flood damage.

People accused some UP chairmen for the irregularities with the connivance of some dishonest agriculture officials.

Farmers of Sirajganj, Natore, Kurigram, Pabna, Bogra, Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Chapainawabganj, Nilphamari and Naogaon are the worst sufferers.

Another report from Gopalganj adds: Acute scarcity

of seed has been prevailing in the district.

An higher official of the district AED said some 44,000 hectares of land in four thanas of the district have been brought under IRRI and 'Aman' cultivation, but the cultivation target may not be achieved for want of seeds.

The dealers of the district received only 195 metric tons of seeds this season against the needs of 1,625 metric tons, he added.

The officials also said that they issued a letter to the higher authorities to ensure adequate supply of seeds to mitigate the problem.

## 30 hurt as villagers clash in Patuakhali

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Dec 8: At least 30 people including three women were injured, 13 of them critically in separate clashes over harvesting of paddy in different areas of Kalapara thana under Patuakhali district in the early hours of Thursday and Friday.

Hospital sources identified the injured persons as Meherunnesa, 20, Goutam Kumar, 22, Mizanur Rahman, 20, Rabiul, 15, Zakir Hossain, 26, Mariam Begum, 45, Manju Musuli, 25, Md Ibrahim, 25, Hasina Begum, 30, Shimul Mia, 18, Firoj Howlader, 20, Alam Mia, 40, and Kazi Al-Mamun, 25.

## 2 Indians held near Naogaon border

NAOGAON, Dec 8: BDR personnel detained two Indian nationals while they were moving around suspiciously within Bangladesh territory near the border, reports APB.

The two gave their identities as Abdul Gani and Abdul Hamid and said they hailed from village Gochhaipur in West 24 Pargona district of the West Bengal.

Police said they were nabbed by the BDR personnel near the headquarters of 37 Rifle Battalion and later handed over to Sadar police.

## Teenage girl gets life term for murder

PIROJPUR, Dec 8: A court on Sunday convicted a teenaged girl and sentenced her to life imprisonment for killing a minor girl in 1997, reports UNB.

The convict was identified as Piara Akhter, 16, daughter of Anis Mridha at Chhoto Harji village in Mathbaria thana.

The case history in brief: Piara killed Mejbin, 4, daughter of Hafez Ziaul Haq of the same village on April 22, 1997. Villagers caught Piara and handed her over to police as she tried to leave the village after the murder.

After examining the records and witnesses, the District and Sessions Judge handed down the verdict.

## Security of 'Rajshahi Betar Kendro' threatened

RAJSHAHI, Dec 8: The security of the transmission centre of Rajshahi Betar has seriously been threatened due to absence of proper boundary wall, reports UNB.

The transmission centre was constructed in the 1960's on 55.89 acres of land at the southern side of the main gate of the university here. The capacity of the centre then was 10 kilowatt. The main radio station is located six kilometres west of the transmission centre.

Sources in the centre said from the very beginning the authorities have been neglecting it and no new machinery was added to the centre since then.

At the beginning, said the sources, there was a boundary wall around the centre. Over the years, the wall was destroyed and was replaced by a barbed fencing. But the fencing was also destroyed leaving the centre unprotected from any unauthorised intrusion.

In fact, a number of path-

ways developed through the area of the centre and the authorities are not preventing local people from using these.

Moreover, they turned a sizeable area of the centre into their cattle-grazing field. Local boys also practice cricket inside it from early morning till late afternoon.

After sundown, anti-social elements reportedly use the place as their den for drug abuse and other criminal activities. A huge number of empty bottles of phenisidyl syrup can be found near the tower of the transmission centre.

A new transmission centre for Rajshahi Betar was constructed at Kahali in Bogra district with a capacity of 100 kilowatt. But due to various technical reasons, it is not being used.

The concerned officials have urged the authorities to take measures for ensuring the security of the transmission centre.

## Goat plague breaks out in Jessore district

JESSORE, Dec 8: Goat plague has broken out in different parts of the district in an alarming rate, reports UNB.

Three thanas of the district — Chowgachha, Monirampur and Keshabpur — are the worst affected, said the people.

A survey conducted by an NGO revealed that about six per cent of goat in these thanas have been affected by the disease known as PPR.

Nearly 500 goats died on account of non-availability of necessary drugs in the recent years. The poor villagers could not afford to buy expensive medicines as prescribed by the Live Stock office.

The people have demanded of the authorities concerned to ensure the supply of necessary medicines to save the domestic animal from pre-mature death.

Another report says from Narail: Acute scarcity of fodder has been prevailing in the district after the flood and the farmers are compelled to sell their cattle at throwaway prices.

Standing crops on a vast tract of land were damaged during the devastating flood that lasted about three months causing scarcity of different kinds of fodder like hay, rice dust and wheat powder.

Taking advantage of the situation, a section of traders have increased the prices of grass, hay, bran and oil cake in the local markets.

A medium bundle of hay weighing about 20 kg now costs Tk 60 to 80 in the locality, which is beyond the reach of the poor flood-hit farmers.

Local people and farmers said they are facing serious problems as the cattle are suffering from malnutrition.

They said cattle-head including cow, ox, bullock, goat and sheep are suffering from malnutrition related diseases.

The well-off farmers have been collecting fodder at a high price from distant places to their animals but the poorer people are undone and compelled to sell their cattle at throwaway prices.



RANGAMATI: Local MP, Dipankar Talukder initiated the cleanliness drive at Rangamati General Hospital on the occasion of International Volunteer Day on December 5.