

National

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 Riton Farazi, 25, of village Auliapur in Dasmuna 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 Riton. District and Sessions Judge of Special Court M Shakawat Hossain Bahar after examining the records and witnesses awarded the punishment acquitting others.

Youth festival at Madaripur

MADRIPUR, 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 discussion meeting, organised by Madaripur District Youth Development Directorate, was held at Shahidnata Angon with Abul Hossain, Deputy Director in the chair. Shafid Huq Bhuyan, Additional Deputy Commissioner (gen) and Khalilur Rahman Khan, Chairman, Madaripur Pourashava was the chief guest and the special guest respectively. The meeting was addressed, among others, by advocate Sahiduzzaman Reza, Shamsuddoha, Mahbubur Rahman and Youth Development Directorate officials.

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 beef 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 Malita 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 Malihad village of the thana while doing his contractual works and shot and slaughtered him at a nearby bridge. Meanwhile, Hafizur Rahman, 32, Imam of Allangi 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 brought out a procession protesting the arrest of 22 leaders and workers of BNP, including Pourashava Chairman 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 Bewa, 50, Aziz Khatun, 50, Joy nab, 45, Rahitun Bewa, 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 Joymoti, 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 hideout 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 Hyundi 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 environmental protection. Deputy Director of the local AED Anwarul Alam inaugurated it while Kafliuddin and Jayedur were the instructors.

4 banks start agri-loan disbursement

MADRIPUR, 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 Krishibank 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 inspired 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 'beef' marketed because of lack of supervision by the officials concerned. Quality is never ensured. Butchers at the district headquarters, Purbodhola, Shaimanji, Hironpura, 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

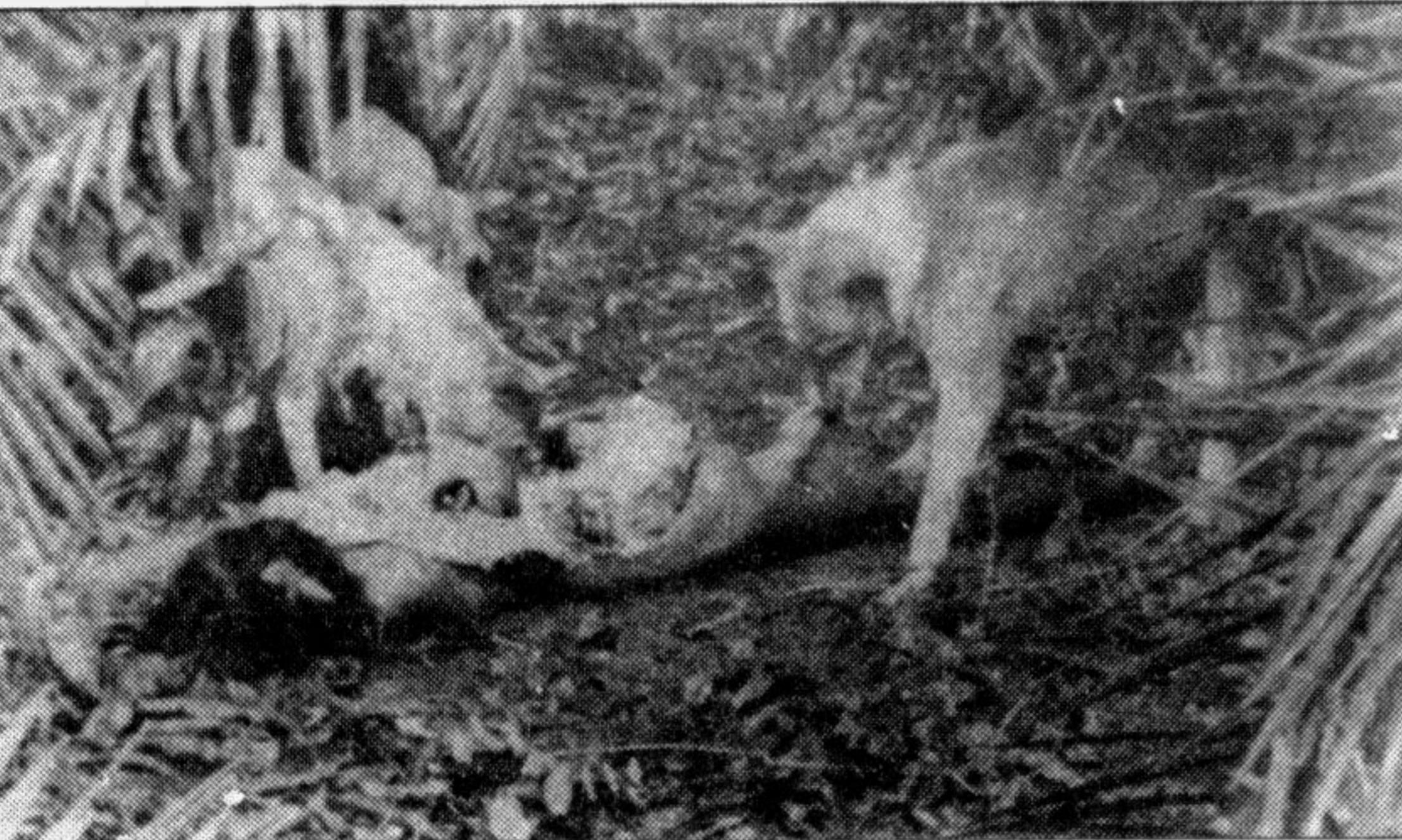
HABIGANJ, Dec 8: The production target of transplanted and broadcast 'Aman' could not be achieved in eight thanas of the district in the season due to pest-attack and flood damage, reports UNB.

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 Chununarhat, 8,995 hectares in Bahubal, 7,175 hectares in Nabiganj, 1,700 hectares in Lakhai, 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 Chhunarhat 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 Hannan, 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. 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 Shironomoni on way to Khulna official. They attempted to reorganise themselves and tried to

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.

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If may be mentioned here that the enemy forces took shelter at Fultala and Shironomoni on way to Khulna official. 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 Muktiagar 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 headquarter 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 Mirkapatti 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 Atbarup 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.

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.

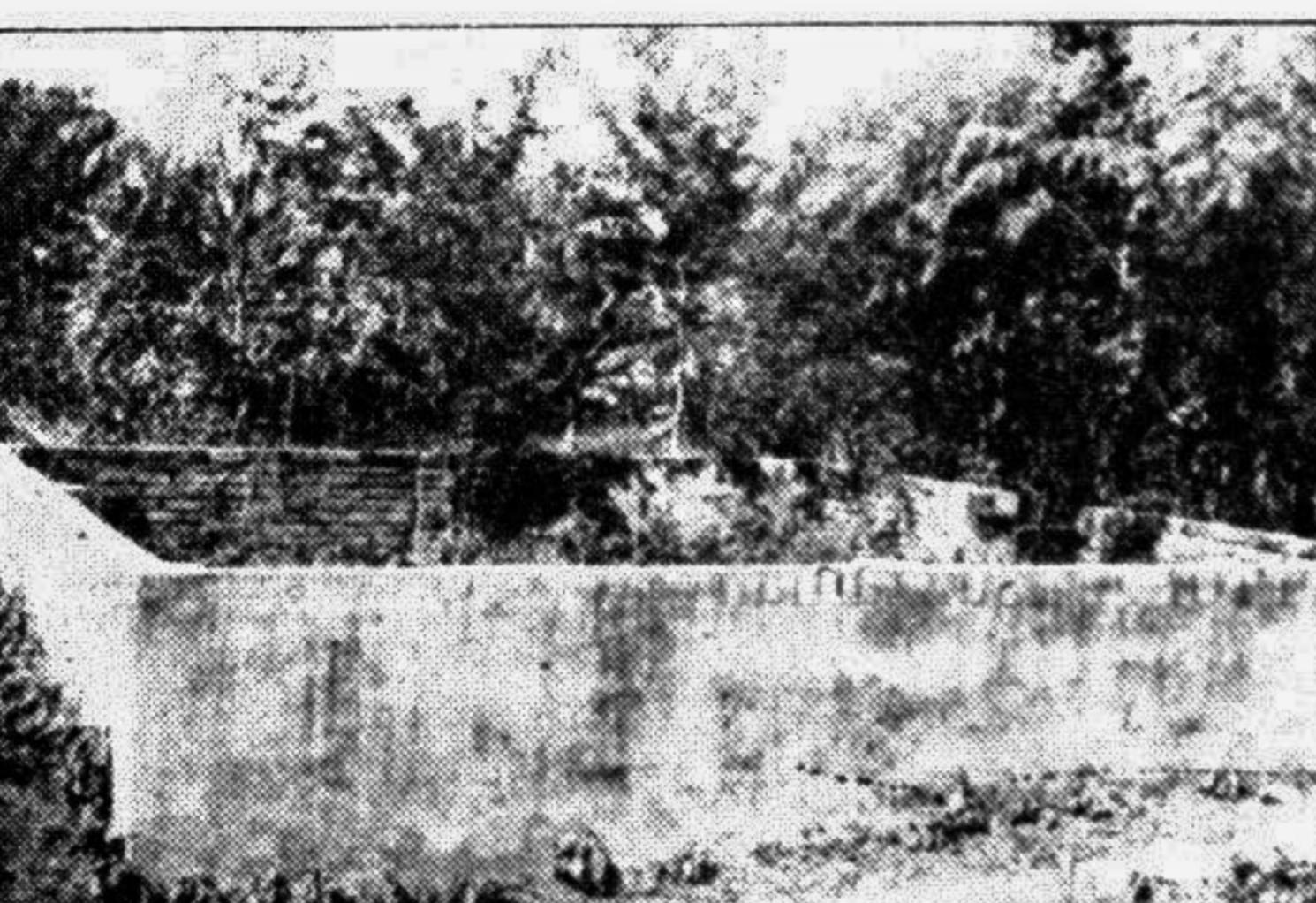
On April 4, the Occupation Pakistan Army came out of Jessore Cantonment and remanded confined in Jessore Cantonment on April 4.

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 on April 4.

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

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



PABNA: No memorial monument has been built till now on the mass graveyard at Dhulauri in Santhia thana where eight valiant freedom fighters are sleeping. They were killed on Nov 27 during the Liberation War in 1971.

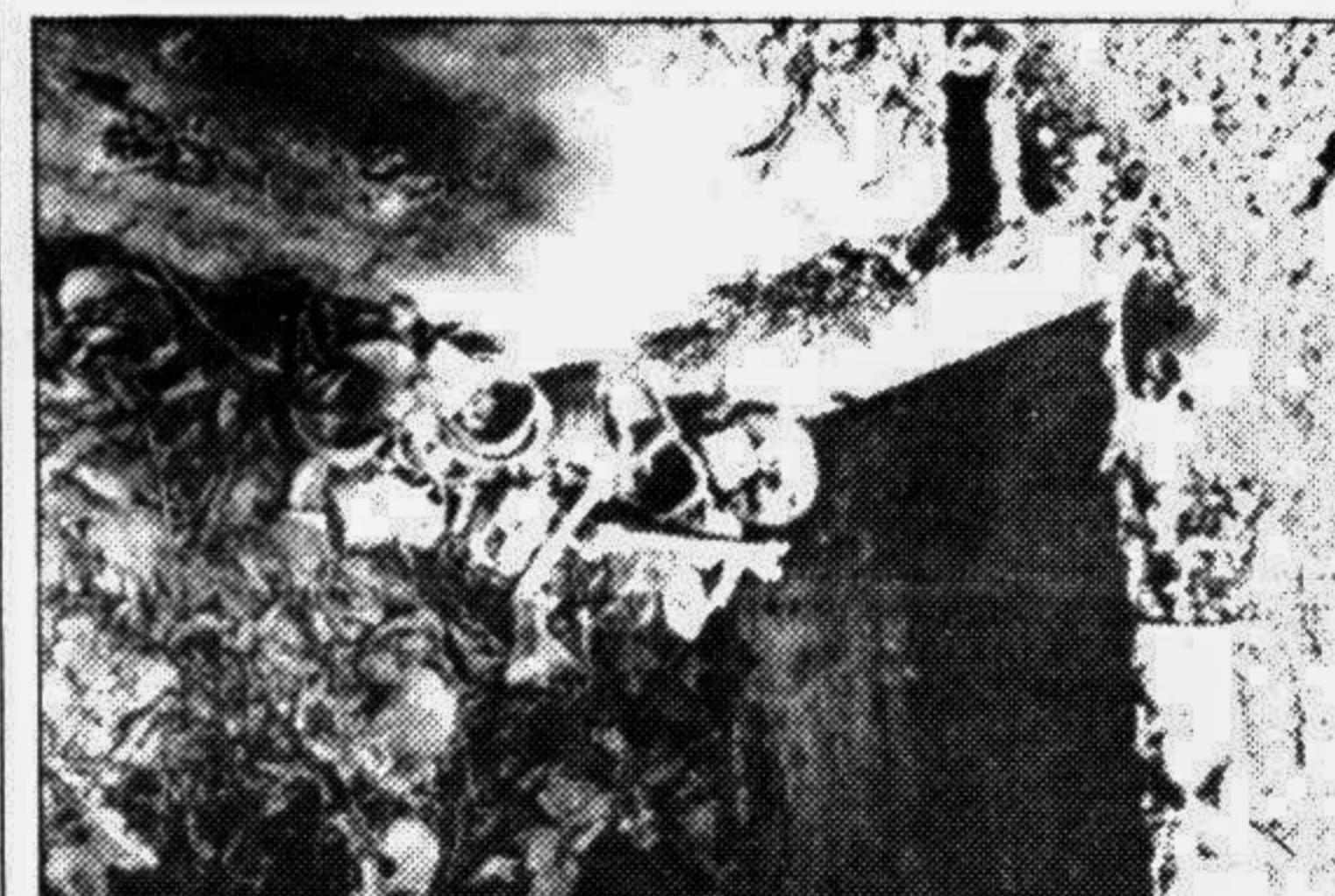
Bamboo clusters being destroyed

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 8: Hundreds of bamboo clusters 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 kutchha 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 the 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 below 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 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.

Another report from Gopalganj adds: Acute scarcity

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 separated 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 Meherunnisa, 20, Goutam Kumar, 22, Mizanur Rahman, 20, Rabibul, 15, Zahir Hossain, 26, Mariam Begum, 45, Manju Musilli, 25, Md Ibrahim, 25, Hasina Begum, 30, Shimul Mia, 18, Firoj Howlader, 20, Alam Mia, 40, and Kazi Al-Mamun, 25.

The two gave their identities as Abdul Gani and Abdul Hamid and said they hailed from village Gochhaipur in West 24 Pargana 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 Sardar police.

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