

News snaps

Four alleged robbers caught

JAMALPUR, Jan 10: Local people caught four alleged members of a gang armed with lethal weapons on Monday night when they were preparing for a robbery in the town, reports APB.

Tk 23 cr rehabilitation programme

RAJBARI, Jan 10: A 23 crore taka programme for rehabilitation of families of 1,400 handicapped people is being implemented here, reports APB.

Hundreds of small Sishu trees axed

BHERAMARA, Jan 10: Hundreds of small 'Sishu' trees are being axed in 12 thanas of greater Kushtia district following the outbreak of an unidentified disease, reports APB.

Wheat farming on 15,933 hectares

MANIKGANJ, Jan 10: A total of 15,933 hectares of land have been brought under wheat cultivation in seven thanas of the district in the current season, reports BSS.

Tk 1.14 cr loan distributed

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 10: Bangladesh Rural Development Board distributed a total of Taka 1,14,85,000 as loan through four co-operatives among the farmers, landless men and women in the district in 1998-99 fiscal year, reports BSS.

Most projects remain unimplemented

FENI, Jan 10: Even though the project period completed on December 31, most of the projects taken up under Test Relief (TR) programme in the district remained unimplemented, reports UNB.

Lentil plants under pest attack

SHARIATPUR, Jan 10: When farmers embarked on a massive farming to recoup their output losses caused by the devastating flood, pest attack played a havoc with their lentil plants, reports UNB.

Bomb recovered

GAIBANDHA, Jan 10: A big size homemade bomb was recovered from a roadside ditch at Jhineswar on Gaibandha-Palashbari road on Thursday, reports UNB.

Hundreds of cases remain pending

NATORE, Jan 10: Hundreds of cases have been pending with the three Magistrate courts in the district, causing great difficulties to both the plaintiffs and defendants, reports APB.

Number of hemp addicts on rise

SHARIATPUR, Jan 10: The number of hemp addicts is on rise due to increasing cultivation of the contraband in district by growers, reports UNB.

Rampant pilferage of forest resources in Mymensingh

From Aminul Islam

MYMENSINGH, Jan 10: Forest resources in five thanas are being rampantly pilfered by an organised gang of lifters for a long time. As a result a vast tract area of forest lands are being turned into grazing fields gradually.

acres in Trishal and 3,489 acres in Haluaghat thana. Virtually now a vast tract of forest lands have been turned into grazing fields. There are forest resources on only 25 per cent of the aforementioned areas.

Forest areas and when the saplings are dried up, they cut and sell those for fuel. Valuable timbers and dried up saplings are being smuggled out to various parts of the country through different routes.

in Habirbari union of Bhaluka thana. Forest officials also said due to lack of sufficient forest guards in different parts of forest region lifting activities are increasing.



MYMENSINGH: A view of denuded forest land at village Habirbari in Bhaluka thana.

— Star photo

these gangs are very much active for long, but the authorities concerned are not taking proper action against them. Divisional Forest Officer sources said there are 38,000 acres of forest lands in different areas of the district.

tant lifting of timbers are being done by different organised groups in connivance with a section of dishonest forest officials. Besides some people with the help of dishonest forest officials are destroying valuable saplings and other forest resources from the government forest areas.

tial people with the help of dishonest forest officials are allegedly grabbing a vast tract of forest lands from Bhaluka thana forest area. They are grabbing this land by preparing false documents. Many signboards after the name of various proposed industries are also found hanging on both sides of Dhaka-Mymensingh highway

Extraction of date juice going on in full swing

NETRAKONA, Jan 10: Extraction of date juice is going on in full swing in different parts of the district with the advent of winter, reports UNB.

to the villagers particularly to the farmers living in rural areas. Different kinds of cakes are made of newly harvested rice which are enjoyed by all the family members.

on quality. A survey conducted by the local Forest Department revealed that there are some 20,000 date-palm trees in 10 thanas. A good number of people are engaged in collecting and selling the juice thereby maintaining their families.



JHENIDAH: Plying of vehicles are being hindered greatly as truck drivers park their vehicles frequently on busy roads here.

— Star photo

Black smoke emitted from brickfields polluting air

KURIGRAM, Jan 10: Environmental pollution has reached a serious stage in the district due to excessive use of chemical fertiliser and pesticides, indiscriminate felling of trees and destruction of greenery, reports APB.

through the chimneys are polluting the environment and turning areas around waste-lands. The welding workshops which have mushroomed in the district also pose a great threat to the environment.

diated by the blazing electrodes is harmful for human health and very dangerous for unprotected eyes. The smoke discharged by vehicles, many of which are unfit to ply the roads, is another serious pollutant but there is no step by the authorities to check it.

Lethal weapons recovered : 2 arrested

MYMENSINGH, Jan 10: Police arrested two people and recovered some lethal weapons along with a pipe-gun from a residence at Akua Voteghar area in the town on Thursday, reports UNB.

1,127 identified as bonafide freedom fighters

RAJSHAHI, Jan 10: Some 1,127 people were identified as bonafide freedom fighters in nine thanas of the district, reports UNB.

Heart camp in Faridpur

FARIDPUR, Jan 10: A two-day heart camp, organised by Faridpur branch of Bangladesh Heart Foundation concluded here recently, reports BSS.

Scarcity of fertiliser

RAJSHAHI, Jan 10: Acute scarcity of fertiliser is prevailing across the district creating deep frustration among the farmers during the current pick season, reports UNB.

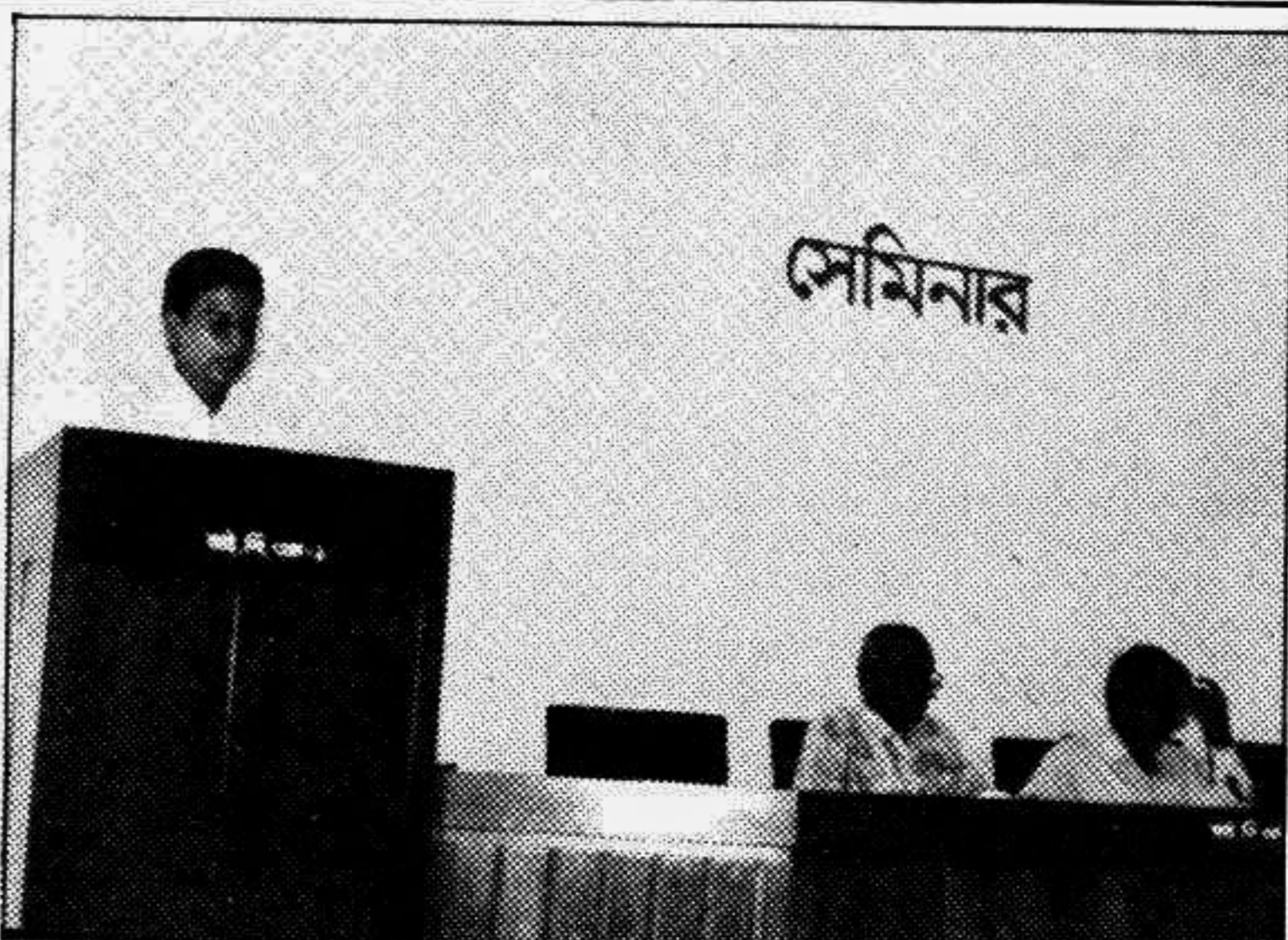
Meanwhile, urea is being sold between Tk 310 and Tk 315 as against Tk 280 per sack. On the other hand, potash fertiliser is available in the market at Tk 450 as against Tk 420.

The price of fertiliser is showing upward trend day by day due to its scarcity and cultivation target on about 1,35,000 hectares of land in the Bardonia region may face a set back, apprehended the farmers.

A section of dishonest traders, taking advantage of the situation, are selling Indian substandard fertilisers with impurity damaging the prospect of crops.

Some cultivators alleged that a section of traders have created artificial scarcity of Urea and TSP to earn windfall profits.

Meanwhile, local markets have been flooded with Indian substandard and adulterated fertilisers and the ignorant farmers are buying the same due to its availability at a cheap price.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Uttam Kumar Das, Research Fellow, Institute of Bangladesh Institute of Bangladesh Studies addressing at a seminar titled: "Trafficking of women: Laws and its practise in selected South Asian countries" at the institute's seminar hall recently. The seminar was presided over by Prof M Badruddin, Department of Law.

— Star photo

Osmany Medical College admission test begins Feb 26

SYLHET, Jan 10: The first year admission test of MAG Osmany Medical College of 1998-99 session will begin at 9 am on February 26, reports UNB.



AGRI-VARSITY(Mymensingh): Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammad Hussain giving away certificates among the senior officers on the concluding session of a higher training course on "Time Management and Decision Making" organised recently by the Graduate Training Institute of the university.

— Star photo

Child marriages up in 5 N-dists

KURIGRAM, Jan 10: Rate of child marriage and divorce have increased to alarming proportions in five districts of greater Rangpur, reports APB.

Smuggling of jute up

KURIGRAM, Jan 10: Smuggling of jute has increased as its price is much higher just across the border because BJC mills are not purchasing jute for the last three months, reports APB.

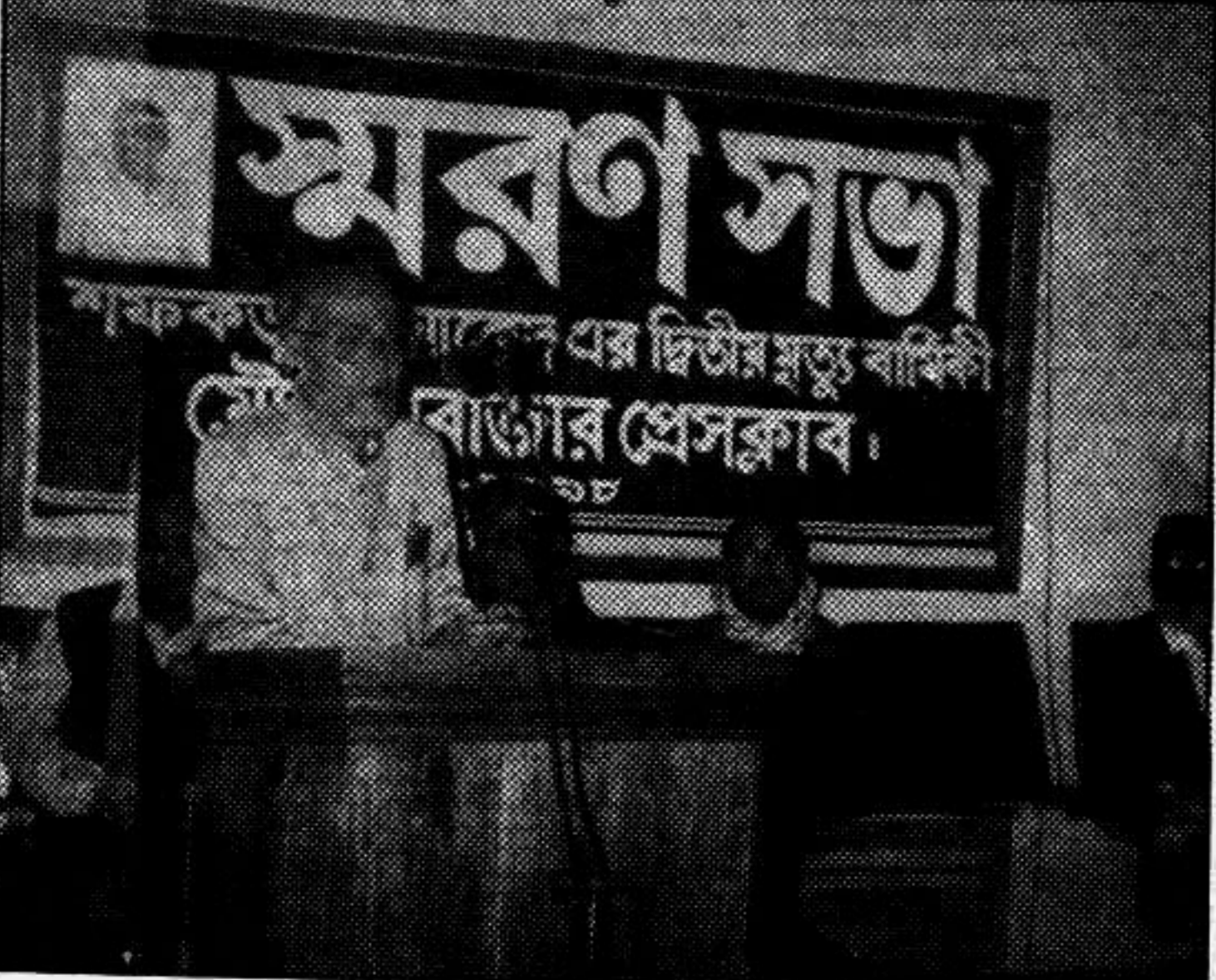
Growers say they have huge stocks. The traders estimate that some 40,000 bales of jute are still lying unsold at growers' homes.

Prices of White Variety of jute has fallen to Tk 180 and that of Tosha to Tk 250 per maund in the local markets. Buyers across the border are buying Bangladesh jute at a price of Tk 370 per maund, traders and growers said.

District Agriculture Extension Department sources said that jute was cultivated in 16,160 hectares of land this year.

These girls become mothers within the first year of their marriage and suffer from various pre and post-natal diseases. These immature housewives often become victims of repression as they can not cope up with family responsibilities. These marriages result in divorce. Many die.

Jute is being smuggled through Baghbhandar, Sonatali, Bhothaat, Joymonirhat and Shnghar borders, they said. Nine jute mills had opened purchasing centres, three in Sadar thana, two in Ulipur thana, two in Chilmari thana and one each in Nageswari and Bhurangamari thanas. The market was buoyant when the centres bought jute at the beginning of the season, they said. But the jute markets have now become virtually 'buyerless'. A section of middlemen, including representatives of some shipper agencies, have been buying jute at throw-away prices.



MOULVIBAZAR: A discussion meeting was arranged at the local press club recently on the occasion of the second death anniversary of Shafquatul Wahed, an organiser of the Liberation War.

Three alleged rapists sued

PATUAKHALI, Jan 10: After being directed by the Magistrate Court, Mirzapur thana filed a case on Thursday against three youths for violating the chastity of a woman, reports UNB.

Pottery of Sherpur on verge of extinction

SHERPUR, Jan 10: The pottery of Sherpur, which was once famed throughout undivided Bengal, is now becoming extinct, a study shows, reports APB.

become dear. The pottery items however can no longer be sold as cheap as before. Moreover, the impoverished potters do not have enough capital to resume their age-old profession, said observers.

The community called Pal, who have been traditional potters, are trying desperately to keep it alive. But various factors, along with the present preference of the people for unbreakable aluminium and plastic goods, are largely negating their efforts.

Unless the government provides adequate capital and opens up new markets, this age-old cottage industry, so long a distinctive feature of indigenous culture, will vanish into irretrievable past, observe the potters.

Their products, especially plates, bowls and other kitchen-ware, and toys such as dolls, were in heavy demand in Assam, Bengal and Orissa, history reveals. But today very little pottery is produced and the Pal and other potters had to switch over to other vocations for their survival.

Thousands of devotees of the Pir Sahib from different places attended the Urs. The programme of the Urs included feeding of the distressed, special prayers and session of spiritual songs.