

# News snaps

## Installation

**CHANDPUR, Oct 12:** The 26th installation ceremony of Chandpur Rotary Club was held on Friday at Rotary Bhaban, reports BSS.

Eminent writer and journalist Syed Abul Maksud attended the function as the chief guest while President of Rotary Club, Chandpur, Dr S M Shahidullah was in the chair. The function was addressed, among others, by Dr M A Gafur, Prof Md Jakir Hossain, Secretary Rotary Club, Rtn Tamal Kumar Ghosh, President, Chandpur Press Club Qamruzzaman Chowdhury and Rtn Abdul Ahad of Chittagong Rotary Club. Addressing the function Syed Abul Maksud appreciated the humanitarian service rendered by Chandpur Rotary Club on various occasions. He urged the Rotarians to help the distressed in the rural areas.

## 31,000 arrested in 6 months

**RAJSHAHI, Oct 12:** Police arrested 31,000 people from different parts of Rajshahi division on various charges in last six months, reports UNB.

During the period, they also recovered 263 firearms, including revolvers, pistols and rifles, and 210 rounds of bullet. Of the arrested, 19,300 people were charged criminals while 177 held in arms cases, 36 caught on charge of terrorism and 11,494 in other cases. A total of 101 cases were filed with various thanas during the period.

## Bus passenger stabbed, robbed

**NARSINGDI, Oct 12:** Armed dacoits stormed a Dhaka-bound bus coming from Habiganj, near Baricha in Raipura thana on Friday, reports BSS.

The dacoits stabbed four passengers and looted cash and valuables, worth about Taka five lakh. Police sources said, a group of dacoits, numbering about 10, boarded the bus in the guise of passengers from Bhairab Bus Station. They attacked the passengers when the bus was crossing Baricha area, at about 9:30 pm. The dacoits robbed cash and valuables worth about taka five lakh from the passengers. After committing dacoity the dacoits got down at Morjal in Raipura thana. Public caught two dacoits, Babul, 30, and Nayan, 25, and recovered Taka 9,845 from them. The dacoits were handed over to the police.

## Teachers' Day observed

**MADARIPUR, Oct 12:** International Teachers Day was observed on October 5, reports BSS.

Madaripur Teachers Association arranged various programmes to mark the day. A discussion was held at Alhaj Aminuddin High School premises. President of the Teachers Association Md Amzad Hossain was in the chair. Alhaj Mubarak Ali and Principal Mahabuddin Ahmed attended the meeting as the chief guest and special guest respectively. Speakers at the meeting emphasised the need for proper social status and job security of the teachers' community. Later on District Teachers Association brought out a rally, led by Amzad Hossain, from the Alhaj Aminuddin High School premises which paraded the main roads of the town.

## 2700 VGF cards allotted


**CHUADANGA, Oct 12:** The government has allotted a total of 2,700 VGF cards under special programme for distribution of 81 tonnes of foodgrains among the 2,700 destitute families of Alamdanga, Darsana and Jibannagar Poursabhas of the district, reports BSS.

The distribution programme, for three months, began from August 15. According to an official source, 900 cards have been allotted for each of the three Poursabhas. Each cardholder is getting 10 kgs of foodgrains every month. The programme will continue till November 14 '99.

## Computer training course

**MANIKGANJ, Oct 12:** A four-month computer training course organised by the Youth Development Directorate for unemployed educated youths began at its office here last week, reports BSS.

A total of 24 youths both female and male from different parts of the district are being imparted training on computer technology. The trainees will be provided with loan by the directorate to invest in business. This is for the first time that educated youths are being imparted training on computer technology.



Abdul Hye Khan, Zonal manager of Faridpur Grameen Bank distributing Raja Bodwa Award recently among the recipients for their good performance. — Star photo

## Abducted truck driver freed

**RANGAMATI, Oct 12:** A truck driver who was abducted 18 days ago for ransom was released on Friday at Hathazari in Baghaichhari thana. Police and local people said, reports BSS.

Driver Shah Alam was allegedly abducted by a gang of armed tribal terrorists from Baghaichhari in Baghaichhari upazila on September 19. They demanded Taka five lakh as ransom from the victim. Driver Alam was carrying timber belonging to Bangladesh Forest Development Corporation from Baghaichhari to Kaptai when he was kidnapped.

## Smuggled goods seized

**SATKHIRA, Oct 12:** Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized contraband smuggled goods worth about Taka two lakh from different border areas during the last one week, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the 9th battalion BDR raided several areas of Kaliaganj upazila and seized contraband goods smuggled into Bangladesh from India. The goods included bidi, sugar, salt, onion, spare parts of bicycle and 55 bottles of phenylidyl syrup. The goods worth about Taka two lakh were deposited to the Customs authorities and phenylidyl syrup was handed over to the Narcotics Control Department. None was arrested in this connection.

## Man killed in road accident

**JHENAI DAH, Oct 12:** One middle-aged man was killed and five others were injured in a road accident on Jhenaidah-Khulna highway at Kaliganj upazila on Thursday, reports BSS.

Police and hospital sources said, a Khulna-bound truck fell into a road-side ditch near Raghunathpur under Kaliganj upazila. Ashraf Islam, 35, of Fultala in Khulna district died on the spot. The five injured were admitted to Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital.

## Two electrocuted

**JESSORE, Oct 12:** Two people were electrocuted when they came in touch with a live wire at village Kanadanga in Keshabpur thana on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said Abdul Rashid, 25, son of Shahadat Gazi and Niser, 24, son of Jalal Gazi came in contact with the live wire when a green bamboo touched an electric transmission line. At that time they were cutting it down. Being informed by the villagers, police recovered the bodies.

## Loan disbursed

**MAGURA, Oct 12:** Bangladesh Rural Development Board has disbursed loan over Tk 3.41 crore among 3,559 villagers under a special rural project, reports UNB.

Officials said BRDB also recovered over Tk 2.83 crore from its cooperative members who utilised the money in small projects like cattle fattening, poultry farming, sewing and horticulture.

## Crops on 22,000 acres damaged

**CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Oct 12:** As the impaired portion of Telipara-Basudevpur sluice gate remained unrepaired, floodwaters damaged standing crops on about 22,000 acres of land under Charal-Somepur Flood Control and Water Extraction Sub-Project this year, reports UNB.

A large portion of the embankment was badly damaged during the last year's devastating flood and it could not yet be repaired due to lack of fund. The local farmers, who suffered the huge loss, urged the authorities concerned to immediately repair the embankment.

# Growers selling jute below output cost

**NATORE, Oct 12:** Despite poor output this year, growers are being compelled to sell jute below their production cost in the country's northern region, including Natore, reports UNB.

"Growers in various jute markets of the region are selling jute below the production cost in absence of competitive buyers," said an official.

He said 1,11,047 hectares of land were brought under cultivation of 'Tosha' variety of jute and 70,821 hectares under local variety in 16 northern districts this year with an estimated production target of 1,10,470 bales and 6,61,097 bales respectively.

Some 8159 hectares of land were brought under cultivation in six thanas of Natore district against 20,300 hectares last year.

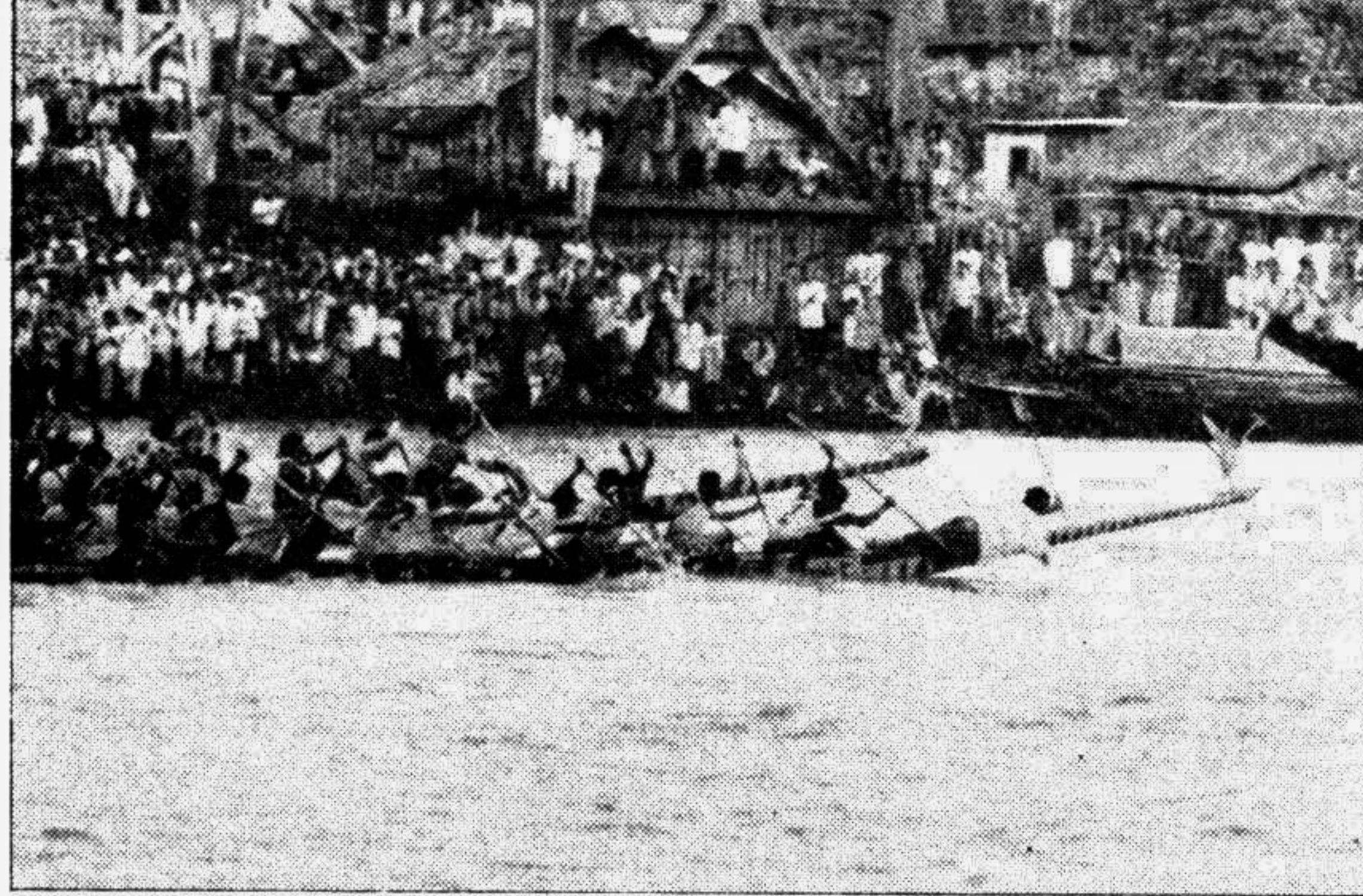
A visit by the journalists to different markets, including Bonpara, Nondigram, Dhanadaha, Sherpur, Baneshwar, Dashedia and Muladuli, showed that local variety of jute was selling at Tk 220-240 per maund while Tosha variety Tk 280-320.

Jute grower Hatem Mollah, who was waiting with 15 maunds of jute at Bonpara, said in Sadar thana, said this year they had to spend on an average Tk 360 for producing one maund of Tosha variety while 270 for local variety.

"But we have to sell jute below production cost for lack of competitive buyers although the supply in the hat is relatively poor this year," he said.

"Due to bitter experience of the previous years, I cultivated jute on five bighas of land this year only to meet my household requirements," said Ershad Ali Mondol of Rashidpur village in Gurudaspur thana.

Experts said that the farmers would stop production of jute in near future if the government fails to come up with remedial measures to salvage the sinking sector.



Traditional boat race  
Sylhet Municipality on Thursday afternoon arranged a colourful boat race in the River Surma. — Star photo

# Unnatural deaths rise in some dists

Five unnatural deaths have been reported recently in the districts of Magura, Thakurgaon and Naogaon, report agencies.

A total of 165 people allegedly committed suicide in four thanas of Magura district in the last eight months.

Of the deaths, 84 were reported from Sadar thana, 41 from Muhammadpur, 25 from Sripur and 15 from Shalikhna thanas.

Dowry. Abrupt ending of love affair, family feud, complex diseases and poverty were said to be the reasons behind the unnatural deaths.

Police said some 288 people committed suicide in Magura district in 1998.

Three boys, two of them brothers, drowned in separate incidents in Ballakandi thana in Thakurgaon district on Friday.

The victims were identified as Ashamoni, Dulal and Abir.

Villagers said Ashamoni and Dulal went to nearby field with their mother and drowned in a ditch as their mother was busy in grazing cows. Abir drowned in a canal adjacent to their house.

Another report from Manikganj says: A worker of Monno Fabrics, Khokon, 25, was electrocuted in Gheor thana as he came in contact with live wire on Saturday. The mishap was said to have occurred due to an electric short-circuit.

Two persons including a girl were killed and three others injured in two separate road accidents in Patinitola and Mahadevpur upazillas of Naogaon district last week.

Eye witnesses said, a young potato trader Ariful died on the spot when a truck turned turtle on Dhamirhat road in Patinitola upazilla. Three persons were injured in the incident. They have been admitted to Patinitola Health Complex.

A seven-year-old girl Supri was run over by a speeding bus near Mahadevpur Bailey bridge. She died on the spot.

# 3 bodies recovered in Khulna

**KHULNA, Sept 12:** Police recovered three bodies, including a minor girl, from different parts of the district today, reports UNB.

One of the dead was identified as Abdul Halim a night guard of residence of a physician in the town.

The police said, a group of dacoits went to the residence of Dr ATN Mondir Kabir in Fultala area Sunday night and strangled Halim to death.

The dacoits then snatched away the key of the gate from him, entered the premises and lifted a motorcycle and a bicycle.

On information, police recovered the body of Halim from a dustbin near the house this morning.

The body of an unidentified young man, roped in the neck, was recovered from near the Roads and Highways Department office at Shironi in the town.

The body of a snake-bitten minor girl was recovered from the Bhairab river in Digholia thana.

Police said the body, floating from Shibbari Mondir in Kalia thana of Narail district, was carrying a declaration of Tk one lakh cash award if anyone (ojhal) can bring back her life.

Meanwhile, police recovered another decomposed body of a young man from Malabhangha in Battaghata thana Sunday night.

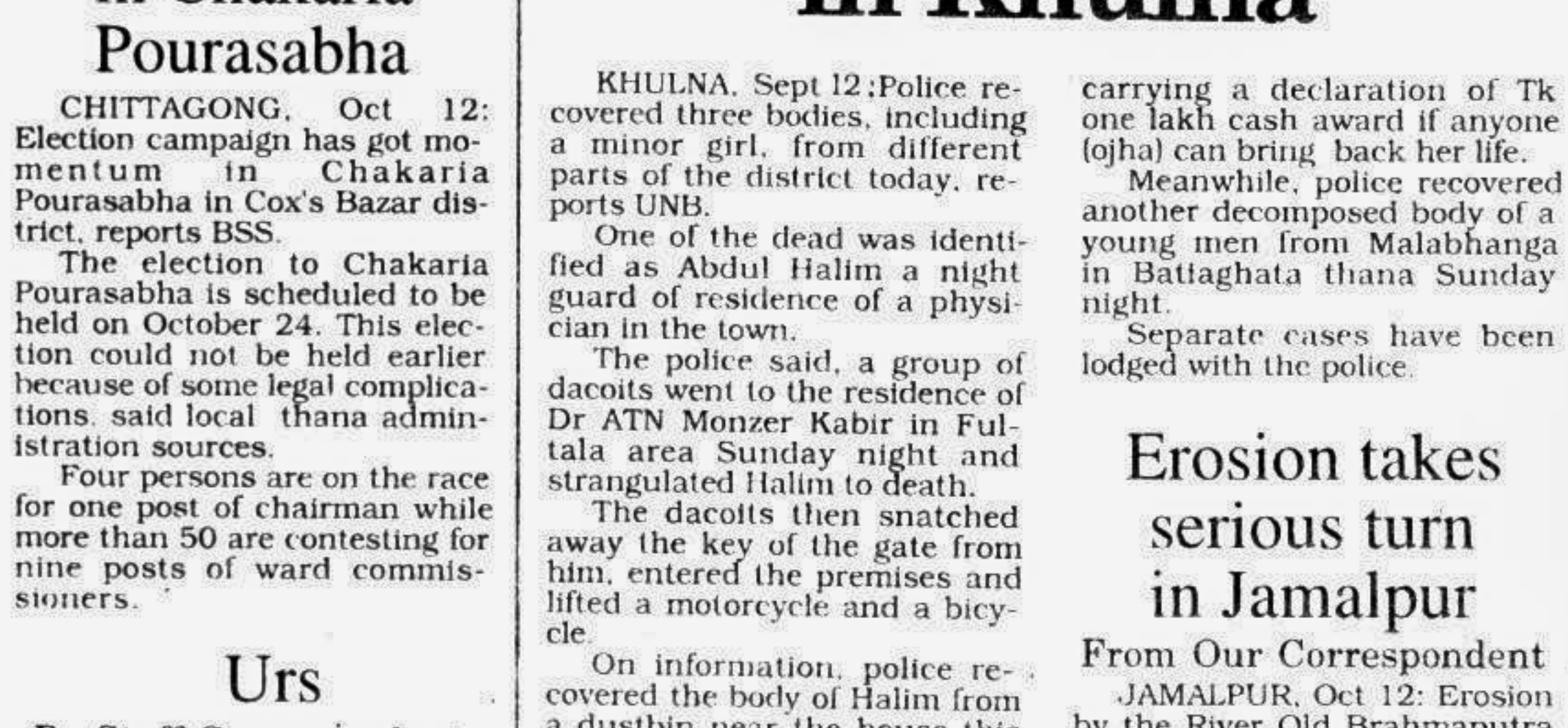
Separate cases have been lodged with the police.

# Erosion takes serious turn in Jamalpur

**From Our Correspondent**  
JAMALPUR, Oct 12: Erosion by the River Old Brahmaputra has taken an alarming turn in recent days, threatening Brahmaputra flood protection embankment on the Jamalpur-Sherpur ferry ghat point.

An official of the Water Development Board said water level of the river fell sharply recently, triggering erosion.

The Jamalpur-Sherpur feeder road has also been threatened. The Roads and Highways Department has taken steps to protect the road.



Magura unit of Theatre has undertaken a teching programme for children on painting, music, recitation acting and hand writing. — Star photo

# Blacksmiths pass hard days in Kishoreganj

**KISHOREGANJ, Sept 12:** The blacksmiths here are facing financial ruin for lack of patronisation and price hike of raw materials, reports UNB.

Some 10,000 blacksmiths here are passing their days in great hardship for long. They do not get fair price for their products due to lack of marketing facilities. They are forced to sell their goods at less than the production cost.

A large number of blacksmiths have already deserted their age-old profession and turned day-labourers for mere survival.

Blacksmiths are mostly concentrated in Katiadi, Hossainpur, Pakundia, Tarail, Itna, Nikli, Austagram, Mitamoni, Bajitpur, Sadar, Kuliarchar, Bhairab and Karimganj.

According to the blacksmiths, prices of their finished products went down in the past few years while raw materials have become dearer.

They make dao, boti, axe, knife, and other essential agri-implements and sell in the local markets.

The blacksmith community urged the authorities to provide them with short-term loan and necessary patronage to help them carry on with their ancestral occupation.

# Housewife gangraped

**From A Correspondent**  
SIRAJGANJ, Oct 12: A housewife was gangraped at village Barobachara under Shahajadpur thana on Friday night.

Villagers said three neighbours—Souful, Azad and Amod—entered the house and raped the 25-year-old woman at gun point. Her husband was not present in the house.

Rapists left the place, leaving the woman, mother of three children, unconscious.



Begum Motia Chowdhury, Minister for Food and Agriculture inaugurating a three-day programme recently on "Annual Research Review Workshop" at BINA in Mymensingh. — Star photo

# Acute fish scarcity in Jamalpur

**From Our Correspondent**  
JAMALPUR, Oct 12: Scarcity of fish has been acute this year in the district, triggering price-hike.

Fishes, especially sweet water fishes, have almost disappeared from water bodies in recent days.

Local fish traders said species such as ruhi, katla, mrigel, kalbaush, chital, kol, magur, shing, shol, gozar, bod, pabda, sarputi, tengra, puti and khoira are now getting dearer as supplies dwindle in markets.

Fisheries Department officials said use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers on crop-lands is polluting waters of beel, haor, canals and rivers, the natural sources of fish, hampering production.

Besides, in most of the water bodies fish is being cultivated in unplanned way, they added.

Moreover, fishing of fries is one of the main reasons for the decline.

Unplanned excavation of canals and construction of embankment and dams have been blamed for causing harm to natural water flow in beel, haor and small rivers. This eventually is affecting the fish production.

## 5 police camps to be set up in Magura

**MAGURA, Oct 12:** In a move to replace vandalism with law and order, the government has decided to set up five police camps here at a cost of Tk 25 lakh, reports UNB.

Police Super M Akbar Ali said the police camps would be set up at Shatruijpur, Shingra, Nakol, Raghobdair and Lalgal-badi Bazar.

He said the works on the project have already begun and are expected to be completed this year.

# Mymensingh DIARY

## Chhatra Samaj leader shot dead

**From Our Correspondent**  
MYMENSINGH, Oct 12: A leader of Jatiya Chhatra Samaj, student front of Jatiya Party was shot dead and another received serious injuries when a group of assassins attacked them at Maskanda area recently.

The victim was identified as Samuil Basir, 30, a resident of Charpara area of the town. Police said, Basir was playing chess at a club in Naskanda area along with his friends in the afternoon. Parul, daughter of Mokbul Hossain, driver of the same area called Basir and his friend Liton out of there. She requested them to go to their house. After reaching there, some assassins attacked them with firearms and sharp weapons in a pre-planned way killing Basir on the spot and injuring Liton critically. Liton was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Police arrested six persons identified as driver Mukbul Hossain, Matin, Ramjan, Parul, Farvin and Kamala. Begum Rawshan Ershad, local Jatiyo Party MP visited the spot.

## Power remains cut off for 12 hours

The supply of electricity supply remained disrupted for nearly 12 hours in greater Mymensingh region due to snapping of an electric wire recently.

According to official sources, electricity went out at about 6:30 pm on Tuesday night which continued till 8:15 am on Wednesday. As a result five districts plunged into deep darkness. The districts are Mymensingh, Netrokona, Kishoreganj, Jamalpur and Sherpur.

Executive Engineer of Electricity Distribution Division-1 Palin Kanti Saha said that after a long drive they found a snapped wire at a remote village in Kishoreganj district. The wire was snapped from 1,320,000 KV supply line. For want of electricity 20 local dailies could not be published in Mymensingh. Production in mills and factories was also seriously affected due to electricity crisis.

## 30 AL workers hurt in road mishap

At least 30 leaders and activists of ruling Awami League and its front organisations were injured, 15 of them critically in a road accident at Bharaduba village in Bhuluka thana here on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway recently.

According to police, a motorcade of 13 vehicles boarding more than five 500 leaders and activists of Iswarganj thana unit of Awami League and its front organisations led by Abus Sattar, MP of AL was going to attend the rousing reception to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Paltan Maidan in Dhaka. Two vehicles of the motorcade skidded off the road after hitting a tank lorry injuring 30 people.

Of the injured, Harun, 25, Sanjib, 35, Majibur, 32, Osman, 20, Harun, 35, Zia, 25, barkat Ullah, 18, Abdul Hossain, 18, Chand Mia, 25, Minu, 30, Rasel, 14, Shafiqul Islam, 24, Azizul Haque, 28, Abdul Hasan, 16, were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH).

## Death condoled

Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) Prof Muhammad Hussain condoled the death of Dr Md Nasim, former professor of Veterinary Science Department recently.

In a condolence message, the VC expressed his deep shock at the sad demise of Nasim and prayed for salvation of the departed soul. He also expressed deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family. He recalled the outstanding contribution of late Nasim to the development of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry education and research in the country.

## Life term for acid thrower

A court here sentenced one person to life term in jail on charge of throwing acid recently.

The court also fined Taka 2,000 in default to suffer one year more rigorous imprisonment (RI). The convicted was identified as Abdul Barez alias Khokon, son of Mukbul Hossain of village Churali in Gouripur thana.



Ruhul Islam Chowdhury, President of Sylhet district unit of the Institute of Diploma Engineers speaking recently at a meeting of diploma engineers of Power Development Board in Sylhet. —Star photo