

News snaps

Fake officer arrested

MANIKGANJ, Dec 10: A fake audit officer was arrested from Nabogranj Union High School of Sadar thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said Kamrul Hasan of Brahmanbaria district was caught red handed when he and his six accomplices impersonated as officials of the Education Ministry deputed to audit of income-expenditure documents of the school. While looking at the documents the fake officials said there were discrepancies in accounts and demanded bribe. Being suspected the school authority informed the district Education Officer and it was soon clear that the audit team is fake. Immediately police was informed. Police arrested Kamrul, but others managed to escape before the arrival of police.

VGF cards distributed

JESSORE, Dec 10: A total of 48 thousands VGF Cards have been distributed among distressed families to provide them food. One thousand five hundred tonnes of rice have been allotted for three months for the valid cards, reports BSS.

According to District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer, these cards have been distributed in 91 unions and 5 pourasabha areas. Each distressed family will be given 10kg rice every month. The programme has been taken up to carry out the directives of the Prime Minister to provide food assistance to the poor and distressed. The rice distribution is going on under the direct supervision of the chairmen and members of the union parishads and pourasabhas.

Suspected thieves' houses gutted

SUNAMGANJ, Dec 10: Angry people set on fire 20 dwelling houses of suspected thieves in village Zanpur under Dhurai thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said at least five thousand people allegedly led by local MP Nasiruddin Chowdhury and some UP Chairmen went to the village and set ablaze the houses in a bid to evict the suspected thieves from the village. Police rushed to the village and on orders from the Magistrate, Mohammad Ibrahim, opened two rounds of fire in the air and lobbed 10 teargas shells to disperse the angry mob. DC Monwar Hossain and police super Nawsher Ali rushed to the spot but failed to pacify the angry people. Police arrested six people from the spot.

Efforts on for rural uplift

JAGANNATHPUR (Sunamganj), Dec 10: Foreign Minister Abdu Samad Azad said here recently the government is firm to ensure development of villages, reports BSS.

Addressing the inauguration of Patli-Rasulganj rural electrification programme, the foreign minister said the government headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will implement all election pledges in phases. He said the Prime Minister is aware of the commitments she had made to people. Her government is working hard to materialise those, Azad said.

Discussion on youth festival

MADARIPUR, Dec 10: A discussion was held here jointly organised by the District Administration and the District Youth Development Department on the occasion of national youth festival at Shadhinata Aungson premises on December 1, reports BSS.

The discussion was presided over by Assistant Director of Youth Development Directorate Sheikh Sha M Farid. Additional Deputy Commissioner M Mustafa attended the discussion as the chief guest.

Sweet potato farming scheme

THAKURGAON, Dec 10: An ambitious scheme has been taken up to cultivate sweet potato and peanut in the northern districts during the current Rabi season, reports UNB.

Agriculture officials said some 15,000 hectares would be brought under sweet potato cultivation in 15 northern districts and 4,300 hectares under peanut cultivation in 11 districts. District-wise breakdown of sweet potato cultivation — 3,000 hectares in Rajshahi, 250 hectares each in Natore, Naogaon and Joybarhat, 1,750 hectares in Sirajganj, 550 hectares each in Bogra, Ranpur, Nilphamari, Thakurgaon and Lalmonirhat, 1,400 hectares in Kurigram, 1,650 hectares in Gaibandha, 650 hectares in Dinajpur and 850 hectares in Panchagarh. This year the production target of sweet potato has been set at 1.18 lakh metric tons. The districts, which have been brought under peanut cultivation included Panchagarh, Dinajpur, Naogaon, Natore, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Pabna, Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Kurigram and Bogra with a target of 8,170 metric tons.

Scarcity of Rabi crops seeds

FENI, Dec 10: Scarcity of high yielding variety of seeds of various Rabi crops is being faced by poor farmers here that will hamper production, reports UNB.

Production affected last year resulted in scarcity and high prices of seeds of HYV Aus, Aman and Boro paddy, jute, pepper, wheat, pulse, soybean and other vegetables. Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has closed down 11 out of its 14 seeds sale centres in Sadar thana causing problem for the farmers. They are to travel far-flung areas to procure seeds. Despite enthusiasm among the farmers for producing more, the production target is unlikely to achieve here due to scarcity of seeds.

Four commit suicide

MAGURA, Dec 10: Four people including two teenage girls, have committed suicide in two thanas here, reports UNB.

According to police, hospital and family sources, Kalpana Rani Bhowmik, 42, wife of Sukumar Bhowmik of Chandan-Protap village under Sadar thana, took her life over family feud on November 28. A teenager girl, Hasia Khatun, 18, of Ghoranas village in same thana, committed suicide by hanging on November 27 after her love affair with a neighbour boy was broken down. On November 25, Nannu, 18, son of Abul Kalam of Nizananduli village under Sadar thana, killed himself by hanging with a rope following a quarrel in the family. Zakia Begum, 16, daughter of Abdur Razzak Dhali of Katli village under Shalikhata thana, took her life by taking poison. She allegedly committed suicide on November 23 after failure of her love affair.

Red-letter day

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Dec 10: December 11 is the red-letter day for the residents of Kushtia town. On this day in 1971 the district headquarters was finally freed from the clutches of Pakistani occupation. The occupation soldiers and their local collaborators — members of Razakar, Al Bader and Al Shams forces — fled the town in the face of fierce attack by the Allied Forces.

The occupation forces left for Ishwardi under Pabna district through the Harding Bridge. Fierce fighting took place after the Allied Forces entered the town on December 8. The Pakistani soldiers experienced heavy casualties in several battles after Allied Forces launched attacks, forcing them to retreat from the battlefields.

And finally on December 10 at night the Pakistani soldiers fled the town. Local people and freedom fighters started celebration at the dawn of December 11 in the town. Men, women and children in their thousands took to the streets, dancing, singing and chanting slogans of victory.

Kushtia people launched attacks on Pakistani army on March 29. They resisted them and the town remained free until April 16, 1971.

In the first battle Abdul Monim, Zafarullah Khan Chaudhury and 18 others were injured and they were sent to neighbouring Indian hospitals for treatment. Freedom fighters Abdul Monim, Abdul Hadi, Marfat Ali, Abdul Jalil Daliluddin, Ziaul Bari Noman, Shahidul Islam Kilo, Akkas Ali Monju, Bahauddin, Badsha, Anwar Akhter, Sultan and Faruque fought in the battle under the leadership of Major Osman, head of the then Chingra zone EPR.

The district headquarters remained under the control of freedom fighters for 16 days. The Pakistani Army recaptured the town on April 17, 1971 and started indiscriminate killing and looting. Important structures in the town were burnt to ashes. The marauding forces killed at least 10 thousand people in Kushtia, burnt and damaged about five lakh houses, rendering about 15 lakh people homeless.

BMA cadets urged to uphold spirit of Liberation War

BHATIARY, Chittagong, Dec 10: Water Resources Minister Abdur Razaque has urged the Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA) gentlemen cadets to uphold the glory of the armed forces being imbued with the spirit of the War of Liberation and through courage, keenness and broadening of mentality, reports BSS.

He called upon the cadets to come forward to put in their mite for socio-economic development of the country side by side with discharging the responsibility of safeguarding the independence and sovereignty of the country.

"Courage, honesty and skills are the main elements to judge the competence of the Armed Forces," the Minister said while addressing the certificate distribution ceremony of BMA Long Course-41 at the academy premises recently.

The function was also addressed, among others, by local Parliament Member Abul Kashem Mastar, Area Commander of Bangladesh Army Major General Abu Kaiser Fajal Kabir, Brigadier Fazle Elahi and Colonel Ananta Kumar Kor.

Ninety-six gentleman cadets appeared in the BA and BSC examinations under the National University and of them 90 have duly passed and two got Gold Medals for their outstanding success.

Grameen Bank official robbed of Tk 14,000

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, Dec 10: Muggers stabbed an officer of Grameen Bank and snatched Taka 14 thousand from his possession in broad day light recently at Chak Daulatpur village under Daulatpur thana.

The amount of money was recovered from borrower. The victim was rushed to Daulatpur Thana Health Complex. A case was lodged in this connection.

Four outlaws arrested

JESSORE, Dec 10: Police arrested four outlaws of Sulaiman Bahini and recovered firearms from village Noali under Monirampur thana recently reports UNB.

One of them who managed to escape inflicted deep injury to a cop by a sharp knife. Kalaroa thana police in Sathkhira district with the help of Monirampur police in a drive against the outlaws raided a jackfruit garden and arrested the bahini chief Sulaiman and his comrades Anwar, Anser and Farooq.

Another outlaw Nasiruddin, however, managed to escape, injuring constable Abul Hossain. On confessional statement of Farooq, police recovered one double barrel and one single barrel US made guns and a local-made gun, sharp weapons and five bullets, which were hidden under the ground. Injured constable Abul Hossain was admitted to Sathkhira Sadar Hospital.

Jhenidah markets flooded with new Aman paddy

Prices fall considerably

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, Dec 10: The farmers of Jhenidah district have started harvesting of Aman paddy.

With the arrival of harvesting season all the markets here have been flooded with the new paddy. Due to sufficient supply of paddy the price of paddy and rice has fallen considerably.

When this correspondent visited Dakbangla, Nagorbathan, Hatgopalpur, Bishoykhali and Madhupur bazaars in Sadar thana, Selkhpura, Madandanga, Goraganj, Rayera, Kancherkole, hats in Saikupa thana and Kola and Borobazar hats in Kaliganj thana, he saw there a huge quantity of newly harvested BR-10, BR-11, BR-28, Naizershall, Paizam, Ratna and other varieties. One maund of paddy is being sold at Taka 220 to 250 while rice at Taka 370 to 385. Each maund of paddy was being sold at Taka 300 to 320 and rice at Taka 450 to 470 about a month before the harvesting season.

Ansar Ali, 48, a farmer of village Gobindapur, Saheb Ali, 32 of village Paikpara, Torab Ali, 40, of village Sonda in Saikupa thana and Mohiuddin, Kotchandpur thana said that a portion of their Aman fields were affected due to severe rainfall, but the loss was recouped with satisfactory yield. Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Jhenidah fixed a target to produce 190,372 metric tons of Aman paddy on a total of 86,710

hectares of land in Jhenidah Sadar, Saikupa, Harinakundu, Kaliganj, Kotchandpur and Mohespur thanas this season.

The target was achieved as Aman paddy was cultivated on 90,000 hectares of land exceeding the target.



Sellers waiting with Aman paddy at Kaliganj market in Jhenidah district. — Star photo

Changing lifestyle thru' pisciculture

From Our Correspondent

area. During the second phase, a total of Taka 33 crores had been spent for achieving self-reliance in fish production. More than three lakh people of the project had been benefited.

In the present phase four voluntary organisations (NGO) have been working together with MAEP to make the project successful and sustainable. A

total of 2,955 groups have been formed which included 33,000 males and 10,000 females from the target people. A total of Taka 4.51 crore has already been disbursed to the group members as credit.

Till date the project provided training facilities to about 50,000 farmers and 1,000 field staffers to implement the MAEP project.

Meanwhile, more than 20 per cent target people of the project area had been able to change their life style which they never dreamt of even a few years back.

Md Abdul Khaleque, Project Director (PD) and Thomas Moth-Poulsen, Chief Project Advisor (CPA) of MAEP told The Daily Star that duration of the project is likely to be extended up to 2003 because of its success.

BSS from Rangamati adds: Bangladesh Fisheries Department has rehabilitated more than 15,000 rural poor people in 21 districts in the country through implementing Integrated Food Assistance Development Project (IFADEP).

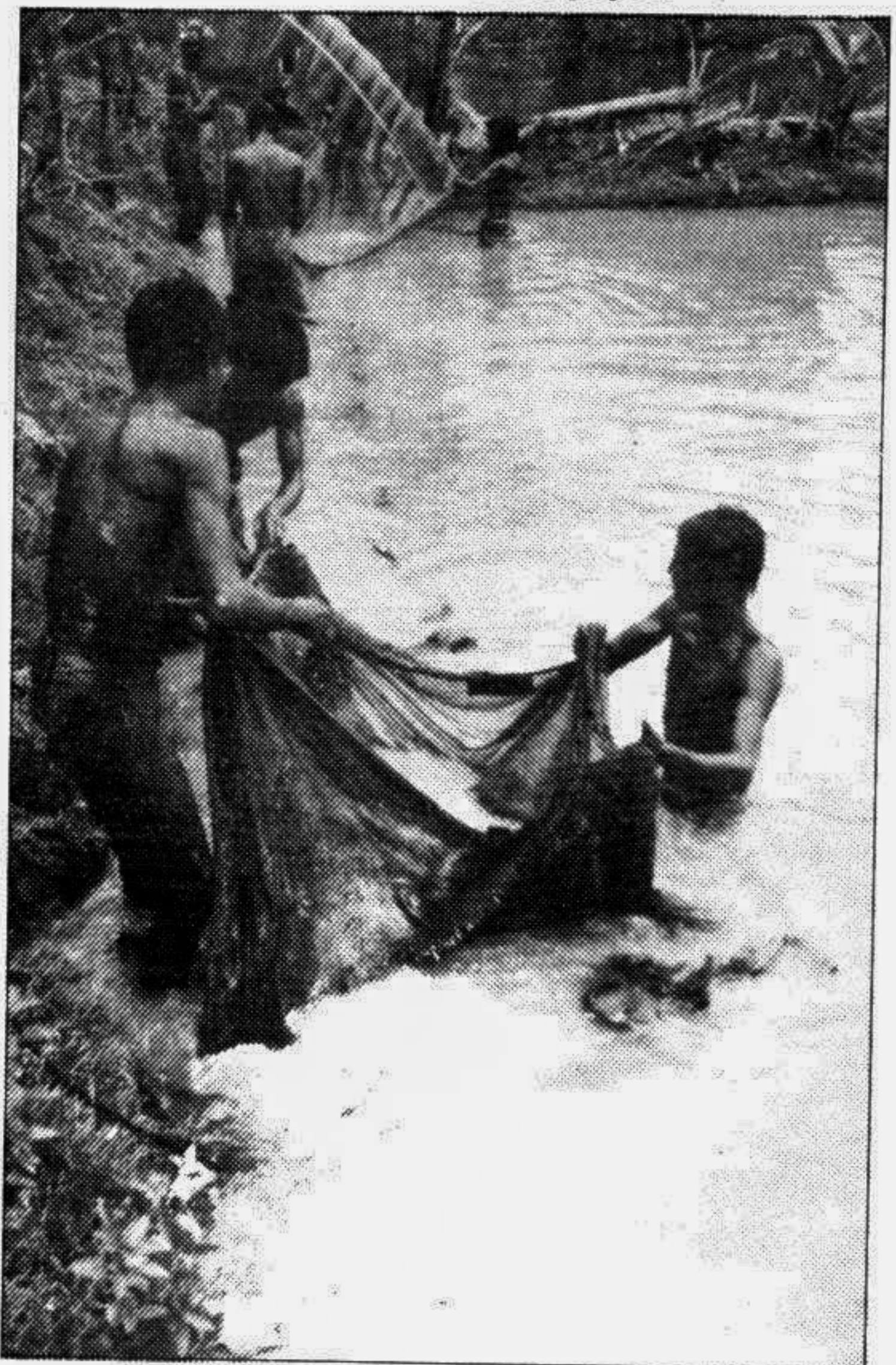
IFADEP was undertaken in July 1995, for a period of five years, totally by European Commission under an agreement with the Government of Bangladesh. Bangladesh Fisheries Department implemented the project with the support of Transac, a Belgium Consulting Company, to promote pisciculture in the country.

This information was revealed in a two-day workshop held to discuss project impact, at Rangamati Hill District Council conference room last week in which resource persons and project officials participated.

A total of 4,000 water bodies, including 2,100 small home-stead ponds, were developed in 21 districts in Rajshahi and Khulna divisions, associating beneficiaries and entrusting 89 non-government organisations to promote pisciculture during the period.

An additional 3,000 tons of fish produced annually from those developed water bodies which covered a water area of 10,000 hectares, it was disclosed in the workshop.

A package of new ideas were also implemented in the project, including reintroduction of fast growing mirror carp, design of cheap mobile hatchery, excavation of ponds as a by-product of road construction and culture of new and nearly extinct fish species, speakers told the workshop.



Fish culture in a MAEP pond. —Star photo

Grave of Shaheed Capt Jahangir

A symbol of sacrifice

SHIBGANJ (Chapainawabganj), Dec 10: A grave by the district Chhoto Sona Masjid draws attention of passers-by and visitors to this small frontier town under Chapainawabganj district, reports BSS.

Shaheed captain Mohiuddin Jahangir, one of the seven liberation war heroes who received the highest gallantry award, Bir Sreshtha, for their supreme sacrifice, was laid to eternal rest in this grave.

The grave is a symbol of sacrifice of the nation. Simultaneously it refers to the history of the liberation in the region and its independence.

Captain Jahangir who served in the Pakistan military, entered Bangladesh on June 10, 1971 from 'Karakoram' and joined the country's freedom struggle. He led different encounters with the Pakistan army and defeated them.

Like other parts of the country the people of this region suffered the atrocities of the Pakistani occupation force during the nine-month long war of liberation in 1971. The Pakistani army had killed hundreds of civilians including women and children in the district.

But the independence loving people forged resistance against the occupation forces just two days after the crackdown on March 23, 1971. Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir, Bir Sreshtha was killed in a face to face encounter with the Pakistan army here at the end of the liberation war on December 14. He was buried at the 'Sona Masjid'

premises as per his last wish. The freedom fighters of the district faces well-equipped Pakistani army mainly with some old 303 rifles. But moral courage gave them spirit to fight against the trained Pakistan army.

In Chapainawabganj, the freedom fight started in the evening of March 27, 1971, two days after the crackdown by the Pakistan junta in Dhaka on the black night of March 25.

Situation of the district town like other mufassil towns of the country was apparently normal but volatile after March 25. The inhabitants of the town were astonished and puzzled to hear an announcement that curfew had been imposed from 6 pm to 6 am on the same night. The sounds of firing and hue and cry were also heard from the EPR camp in Kalyanpur area at the out skirt of Chapainawabganj town on that day.

At 9 pm on March 27, news spread in the town that the Bengal EPR had revolted against the Pakistani army. Immediately after hearing the news, people of the town thronged the EPR camp with bamboo sticks and other lethal weapons available to them to express solidarity with the EPR. On the night, the entire Chapainawabganj town was full of cheer and excitement.

On March 28, Chapainawabganj was a separate leak. Casting of all fear and hesitation, people irrespective of parties and opinions got united and

committed to resist the Pakistani occupation forces. Leaders of all political parties here took a fervent vow to fight against their enemy and free the country from the clutches of Pakistan regime. An 'all party Sangram Parishad' was also formed to launch counter attack and resist the Pakistan army's march towards the town.

But problem cropped in the way continuing the freedom fight and liberating the civilians as there was none to lead the freedom fighters efficiently. The then non-Bengali SDO and Major of EPR went to the camp and ordered the EPR personnel to deposit their arms. But they defied the order and revolted. They also began to shoot fire at the two officers who luckily escaped from the firing and fled the EPR camp. This historic event marked initiation of the liberation war in Chapainawabganj.

On the night, thousands of people have made a barricade on Chapainawabganj road to resist the entrance of the Pakistani army into the town. The above mentioned two officers along with other non-Bengali EPR were in custody of the Bengal EPR jawans at Safura EPR camp.

Two weeks later, Captain Giasuddin came to Chapainawabganj and took the lead of the freedom fighters. Meanwhile, fighting had already been started in Rajshahi town between the freedom fighters and the Pakistan army.

The freedom fighters of Chapainawabganj led by Captain Giasuddin gave support to the freedom fighters of Rajshahi to continue the fight against their enemy forces. At that time the freedom fighters of Chapainawabganj has only an old jeep, two trucks and some 3.3 miles to fight against the well-equipped Pakistani forces.

On April 17, three jet fighters launched heavy air attack on Chapainawabganj town forcing the people to flee. On April 21, a big Pakistani military convoy with 106 jeeps entered the town. Within a few days of capturing Chapainawabganj town the enemy forces killed Dr Moutajuddin and his two daughters, Md Siraj Chowdhury and a large number of people. The killing of the innocent people by the Pakistan army had generated a feeling of revenge in the minds of the Bangali people here and they decided to launch severe counter attack against the enemy.

The Pakistan army in separate attack on the civilians had killed 150 people on September 19 at Boalia union and 30 people at Gomastapur union on April 23, 1971.

People will remember the supreme sacrifice of the heroic sons of the soil during the country's war of liberation. At the same time they will not forget the atrocities of the Pakistani occupation forces and their collaborators from March to December, 1971 on the innocent people of the district.

Mymensingh Liberation Day

From Aminul Islam

MYMENSINGH, Dec 10: December 10, 1971. Mymensingh district was liberated from the clutches of the Pakistani occupation army on this day.

In the turbulent days in 1971, the Pakistani soldiers on many occasions made abortive attempts to enter the district. However, finally they succeeded and entered the district headquarters on April 22, 1971.

The occupation soldiers made their first attempt to enter the district by train. Second time they tried through river route via Kawraih under Gazipur district. And finally they tried to enter the district by road through Madhupur under Tangail district. But the attempts proved futile.

On April 17, 1971 a fierce battle took place at Kalihati under Tangail district. The freedom fighters and Pakistan soldiers locked horns for five successive days. However, the freedom fighters gave in. And the Pakistani soldiers entered the district headquarters on April 22, 1971.

But the freedom fighters continued fighting from their Haluaghat stronghold. Many important battles took place in Haluaghat area. Noted freedom fighter Nazmul Ahsan, a student of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU), sacrificed his life in one of the battles in the area. A residential hall of BAU was named after the martyred freedom fighter for his supreme contribution to the cause of national independence.

On June 25, Major Afsar Uddin led a battle against the Pakistani soldiers at Bawalia Bajught, which lasted for 42 hours. Another fierce battle took place at Nali Para on July 17, leaving at least 17 Pakistani soldiers killed. Besides, other battles took place in Bandhar Ghatta, Tambar, and Taligati areas.

In November 3 battle 103 Pakistani soldiers were detained. However, 21 freedom fighters embraced martyrdom in the battle.

At the end of the war on December 16, Haluaghat thana was totally freed from the Pakistani occupation. Phulpur and Bhaluka thanas were freed on December 8. On the following day, Gouripur, Trishal, Ishwardi and Tarakanda thanas were freed as the Pakistani soldiers were forced to retreat from the areas following fierce attack by the Allied Forces, much to the happiness and relief of the local people.

On December 10, the freedom fighters led by Principal Matur Rahman, now president of the district Awami League, marched towards Mymensingh town. The then district Awami League president Rafiq Uddin Bhuiyan welcomed the heroes and declared Mymensingh district a free area, hoisting the national flag.

Every year local people observe the day as Mymensingh-free Day. In observance of December 10 the district administration and Muktijuddha Sangsad chalk out several programmes. In all the thana headquarters of the district, various socio-cultural organisations also hold programmes to observe the day.

Death in road mishap Villagers go on rampage in Gazipur

GAZIPUR, Dec 10: Angry villagers put up barricades on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Barabari this noon to protest the killing of a schoolboy in an accident, reports UNB.

Zahurul Islam Sarker, 15, who was fatally injured in the road accident here on November 8, died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University in Dhaka on Thursday night.

Blocking traffic, the protesters demonstrated on the road against the killing of the student and ransacked a number of vehicles during the hour-long rampage.

Later, they withdrew the barricade after Ahsanullah Master MP assured them of necessary step in this regard.

Because of use of pesticides

RANGAMATI, Dec 10: Indiscriminate use of pesticides on farmlands has started taking its toll on hill people as they are falling sick after taking vegetables, reports UN.

Experts say growers indiscriminately spray insecticides on their gardens to save their vegetables from pest attack and bring those to markets before the expiry of chemical reaction of the used medicines.

A recent survey, conducted by Department of Environment (DOE), showed that at least 20 types of pesticides, categorised as Organo Phosphorus, Organo Chlorine and Carbonate, are used in the country.

It said effectiveness of the pesticides of carbonate category exists one week while that of Organo Chlorine 2-40 years and Organo Phosphorus 1-10 weeks. Growers in remote areas use pesticides on their croplands without knowing the exact proportion of application of pesticides and their adverse effects.

Substances of these pesticides continue to steadily work in human bodies after consumption of such vegetables causing weakness and various intestinal, heart and liver diseases.



One young man donating blood in Magura town recently at a blood donation campaign organised by Magura Notun Bazaar Memorial Committee on the occasion of 'Katyani Puja'. — Star photo