

News snaps

Discussion on Rokeya

MADARIPUR, Dec 17: A discussion was held here organised by Madaripur District Women Affairs Department (DWAD) at its premises on the occasion of Begum Rokeya Day on December 9, reports BSS.

The discussion was presided over by Deputy Director of DWAD, Madaripur M. Abdus Satter. Deputy Commissioner of Madaripur Farhad Rahman attended the discussion as the chief guest. It was addressed, among others, by District Correspondent of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Serajul Islam Bhuiyan, AKM Nurun Nabi and Abdus Salam. The speakers at the discussion highlighted the outstanding contributions of Begum Rokeya. The discussion was followed by a colourful rally.

UNICEF publication launched

KUSHTIA, Dec 17: Launching ceremony of The Report On The State of The World Children-2000 — a publication of UNICEF was held here recently at the local Shilpakala Academy auditorium, reports BSS.

Prof Mohammad Quaisuddin, Vice-chancellor of Islamic University and Abdus Salam, Deputy Commissioner of Kushtia were the Chief Guest and the Special Guest respectively in the function. The launching ceremony was jointly organised by UNICEF, Khulna and district information office, Kushtia.

Three muggers injured

GAZIPUR, Dec 17: Three muggers were critically injured in a mass beating at Mollah Plaza in Tongi on Tuesday night, reports UNB.

Police said a group of masked men stormed into three jewelries of the market in College Gate area soon after 11 pm on Tuesday night and looted 187 tolas of gold ornaments. But the locals caught three of them — Kamal Nasir and Jewel — while fleeing in a car and gave them a tremendous thrashing. They also recovered some bullets, a pipegun and a small quantity of the looted ornaments from their possession. The robbers also blasted crackers and beat up four employees of the shops creating panic at the people. The injured robbers were admitted to Tongi Hospital. A case was filed.

58 miscreants arrested

CHITTAGONG, Dec 17: Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) arrested 58 miscreants including a terrorist wanted in 14 criminal cases, from different areas of the city during the past 24 hours ending six pm on Wednesday, reports BSS.

CMP also caught red handed two hijackers and seized an auto-rickshaw used by them. Terrorist Choto Alamgir was arrested by Double Mooring police from Mogultooly area in a raid, while hijackers Morshed Alam, 28, and Abul Fazal, 22, were arrested from Rajkhal of Chandgaon. Other CMP thanas rounded up 55 miscreants from different parts of the city.

Death condoled

JESSORE, Dec 17: Education Minister ASHK Sadique on Wednesday condoled the death of renowned freedom fighter and former General Secretary of Monirampur Thana Awami League Radhapa Biswas, reports BSS.

In a message of condolence, the Education Minister expressed his deep shock at the death of Biswas and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family. He also prayed for the salvation of the departed soul. In another condolence message, Khan Tipu Sultan MP also expressed his deep shock at the death of Biswas and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family. He also prayed for the salvation of the departed soul. Radhapa Biswas died of old age complications on Tuesday at the age of 65 at his Monirampur residence.

Dacoits arrested

GAZIPUR, Dec 17: Three inter-district dacoits were caught by public on Wednesday night at Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BARI) area and recovered some gold ornaments and one private car from them, reports BSS.

Police said, the arrested persons were identified as Suzan, 25, Kamal 26, and Nasir, 24. They were alleged members of inter-district dacoits' gang. According to police, the arrested persons looted gold ornaments from two jewelry shops at Mollah Shopping Centre under Tongi Pourasabha on Tuesday during 11 pm hours and left in a private car. Police recovered the private car and some gold ornaments from their possession.

Law and order reviewed

NARSINGDI, Dec 17: A meeting of the District Law and Order Committee was held on Tuesday in the deputy commissioner's conference room, reports BSS.

Presided over by Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Islam the meeting was attended, among others, by Police Super Mokhesur Rahman, Additional District Magistrate Nazrul Islam, Pourasabha Chairman Abdul Matin Sarker and district Awami League Vice President SA Hadi. The meeting discussed prevailing law and order in the six thanas and called upon the law enforcing agencies to take effective measures against criminals and anti-social elements.

Jubo League leader injured

MYMENSINGH, Dec 17: A Jubo League leader was injured in an attack in Gafarganj thana on Monday, reports UNB.

The house of Fakrul Islam, president of Panchbhag union unit of ruling party's youth front, at dead of night and chopped him with sharp weapon leaving him gravely wounded. The criminals also ransacked his house and looted valuables worth about Tk one lakh. Fakhrul was rushed to the district Medical Hospital in a critical condition. A case was filed with the police.

Unauthorised rickshaws up

KUSHTIA, Dec 17: The increasing number of rickshaws has been causing a lot of sufferings to the dwellers of the town since last one year, reports UNB.

Some 4500 licensed rickshaws are plying on the narrow roads of the 8.07 square km area of the municipality causing serious traffic jam in the town everyday. In absence of parking places on the roads in the main commercial area in the town remain blocked most of the time causing inconvenience to the pedestrians. The school-going children are the worst sufferers. The situation aggravated with intrusion in the town of unauthorised rickshaws from nearby unions. Local people urged the authorities to check the unauthorised rickshaws to ease traffic jam in the town.

Work progressing

TANGAIL, Dec 17: Construction of three community clinics has begun in Basail thana at a total cost of Taka twenty lakh under Health and Population Programme Project (HPPP), reports BSS.

The community clinics are being set up to reach health services in villages and ward level by 2000. According to official sources, Bangladesh has received credit from the International Development Agency (IDA), grants from Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and different international development agencies related to health and Population Programme Project (HPPP). The construction will be completed within this fiscal year under the supervision of Local Government Engineering Department.

Sanction for uplift work

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Dec 17: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has sanctioned Taka 82 lakh for the implementation of seven development schemes on top priority basis here in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

The schemes include development of rural roads, installation of deep tubewells, electrification and afforestation. Other ongoing schemes are — repair of some connecting roads and road carpeting, construction of bridges, culverts and drains and re-excavation of ponds, installation of tubewells and supply of pumps.

Rangpur Red Crescent poll

RANGPUR, Dec 17: Fulu Sarkar and Shahida Rahman Jashna have been elected vice-chairman and Secretary respectively of the executive committee of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Rangpur unit, reports BSS.

The other elected members are: M. Mojibur Rahman, Saidur Rahman Montu, Advocate Badrul Islam Chinnu, Kamruzzaman Milon and M. Ashraf Alam Al-Amin. They were elected unopposed for the year 2000-2002 at the annual general meeting held recently at Rangpur Town Hall auditorium. The annual general meeting also approved the audit report of 1998, annual report of 1999 and budget of the year 2000.

Meherpur Bar election

MEHERPUR, Dec 17: The election of Meherpur District Bar Association was held here at its premises on December 11, reports BSS.

It was reported that Advocate M. Abdur Rashid and Advocate M. Abdur Jabbar were elected as president and general secretary respectively. The other elected members were: Vice President M. Akhtaruzzaman, Joint Secretary M. Khokon and Treasurer M. Moniruddin.

V-Day in districts

The 29th Victory Day was celebrated in districts on Thursday with a renewed pledge to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh, reports BSS.

In Narayanganj, the programmes of the day included morning parade, hoisting of the national flag atop all public and private buildings, placing wreaths at the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Chashara victory stand, reception to the shahed families and disabled freedom fighters in Shaheed Mukti Joddha hall auditorium, special prayers for the peace and progress of the country and illumination in the evening.

A colourful parade was held at Chashara Osmany Stadium in the morning. The DC, Abdur Rahman took salute of the boys, girls, Fire Brigade personnel, rovers, scouts, rangers, BNCC and fellow birds.

In the reception, speakers recollected the memories of the War of Liberation and expressed sympathy to those who lost their near and dear ones.

They also urged the government to give more financial assistance to the members of the shahed families.

In Chittagong, the day was heralded with 21-gun salute at court building, playing of whistle by railway engines and ships, hoisting of national flag atop private and public buildings and placing of wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar at KC Dey Road.

The main function of the day was held at M A Aziz Stadium.

Contingents of police, ansar, VDP, boy scouts, girl guides and school children took part in a march past at the stadium.

Divisional Commissioner A S M Mabdul Islam took salute at the march past. School boys and girls demonstrated physical feats.

Other programmes included film show, painting competition for children, reception for disabled freedom fighters and members of Shaheed families, friendly football match, discussions and cultural functions.

Special prayer was offered at all mosques, temples and other places of worship for peace and prosperity of the nation.

All private and public buildings were illuminated in the evening.

Chittagong City Corporation observed the day through a colourful programme which included procession and march past by the students of city corporation schools and colleges at parade ground, rally of students, teachers and employees and discussion.

City corporation observed two minutes silence from 4:30 pm to pay home to the martyrs and blew sirens at important points of the city in the afternoon.

A colourful procession led by Chittagong city Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury started from Bijoy Mancha and terminated at the same place after parading different roads of the city.

Earlier in the day, Chittagong City Mayor, Chittagong Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong and leaders of different political parties, socio-cultural and professional bodies placed wreaths at the Shaheed Minar and at the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Bijoy Mela parishad arranged a speech competition in the afternoon.

Different units of Awami League, BNP, Mukti-joddha Sangsad, Shishu Academy, Khelaghar, Chhatra League and other organisations observed the day with separate programmes.

In Rajshahi, the day's programme began with the booming of 21-gun salute at one minute past midnight on Wednesday night at the local police line.

National flag was hoisted atop private and public buildings in the morning to mark the occasion.

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Different socio-cultural organisations, political parties including Awami League and BNP, Rajshahi University, Rajshahi City Press Club, Rajshahi Metropolitan Press Club, Rajshahi district unit to Mukti Joddha Sangsad, Islamic Foundation and Rajshahi City Corporation chalked out elaborate programmes to celebrate the day in a befitting manner.

A combined march past of police, ansars, VDPs, BNCCs, boy scouts and city juvenile organisations was held at the local A H M Kamaruzzaman Stadium in the morning. Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Khan Shahabuddin took the salute at the march past.

Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor Prof Saidur Rahman Khan, Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA), Rajshahi City Corporation, city Awami League and other organisations placed wreaths at Shaheed Minars in different city areas to mark the occasion.

Improved diets were served among the inmates in jail, orphanages and hospitals to celebrate the occasion. Special prayers were offered in different mosques and places of worship on the day for continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

Discussion meetings, cultural functions, painting exhibitions, football match, illumination of important buildings and art exhibition were other highlights of the day. Rajshahi City Corporation accorded a reception to 'Mukti Joddhas' on the occasion.

In Khulna, the day was heralded with 21-gun salute at one minute past midnight on Wednesday night and placing of wreaths at Shaheed Smriti Soudha at Gallamari.

National flag was hoisted ceremonially by the Khulna Divisional Commissioner Abul Kashem at Khulna Stadium ground on Thursday morning. The commissioner took the salute of a combined march past by the members of police, ansars, VDP and students of different educational institutions.

Naval ships remained open for the members of the public in the afternoon at the BIWTA ghat.

Documentary films on the War of Liberation were screened in the cinema halls in the city.

Painting contest was held at Khulna Press Club and Khulna City Corporation auditorium and women's sports competition was held at the local Pioneer Girls' School premises.

Special prayers were offered in all mosques and other places of worship for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

Various political and socio-cultural organisations observed the day in a befitting manner amid different programmes.

Bangladesh Awami League and its front organisations observed the day through day-long programmes which included placing of floral wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu, hoisting of national and party flag at the Awami League Central Office in the morning.

A victory procession under the auspices of Awami League was brought out in the city in the morning. A discussion meeting was also held at the Awami League office on this occasion.

BNP, Jatiya Party, Workers Party, Khulna University, Bangladesh Mukti Joddha Sangsad, Mukti Joddha Chhatra Chakra Kendra, Sammito Sangskritik Jote, Bangabandhu Sangskritik Parishad, Bangabandhu Sangsad, Pathagar, Bangabandhu Sanghati Parishad, Joy Bangla Parishad, Khulna Press Club, Khulna Union of Journalists, Metropolitan Union of Journalists observed the day by holding separate programmes.

Khulna Station of Bangladesh Betar aired special programmes highlighting the significance of the day while regional daily newspapers published special articles to mark the occasions.

Unusual fall of water in Padma

Bheramara-Paksey route close to suspension

KUSHTIA, Dec 17: Unusual fall of water level in the river Padma has brought the ferry services on Bheramara-Paksey route close to suspension, threatening the road communication between the country's southern and northern regions, reports UNB.

An official at the Hydrology Department attributed the rapid fall of water level in the river to 'Farakka Barrage'. 'Bangladesh is not getting its due share of water of the Ganges despite signing of a water sharing treaty three years back,' he said.

As the water level continues to fall, Bheramara Ferryghat has been relocated to a place 3 km off its present location creating trouble in ferrying vehicles.

Officials said the dredger, engaged by Roads and Highways

Department to dredge the river, remained out of order for the last 15 days.

Meanwhile, the R&H department has started to construct a temporary approach road, but there have been allegations that construction of the road is being delayed for reasons unknown.

Besides, ferries cannot take full load as the river route is losing navigability at the Paksey end due to huge siltation.

The official of the Hydrology Department, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said unabated siltation since 1973 has diverted the flow of the Ganges to several directions largely affecting the Bangladesh side.

Production in Paksey Paper Mills, which needs a huge quantity of water, is being hampered for lack of adequate water, he said adding that the mouth of

the intake channel of the Ganges River is silted up during lean period every year hampering its flow.

Constant deposition of silt has shrunk its mouth to 1325 meters from the original 2190 meters making it difficult to fetch up sufficient water for irrigation in the area.

There are 15 water pumps, including three major ones, to facilitate the irrigation to 3.5 lakh acres of land in the region, but the pumps cannot supply the required quantum of water due to abnormal fall of water level in the river.

Besides, a huge quantity of fertilisers in transported from Mongla port to the northern region. If the ferry service is disrupted, cultivation in the current Rabi season will suffer a serious setback, experts said.



Dewan Farid Gazi MP speaking as the chief guest at a meeting on 'Health awareness for people at grassroots level' arranged recently in Sylhet town in observance of World AIDS Day.

Niazi's bid to woo people failed

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, Dec 17: December 9, 1971 is a red-letter day for the people of Netrakona as they were liberated on the day from the Pakistani occupation.

On the day in 1971 Netrakona was totally freed from the Pakistani occupation after a fierce fighting and at the cost of three freedom fighters.

On December 9, 1971 the occupation soldiers were forced to retreat from the town following a fierce fighting with the freedom fighters. Abu Siddiq Ahmed commanded the freedom fighters. In the fighting, three freedom fighters sacrificed their lives for the cause of national independence. The martyred freedom fighters are Abu Khan, Abdul Aziz and Abdur Rashid.

It was on April 21, 1971, the Pakistani army entered Netrakona through Mymensingh road. On the first day of their invasion they killed, among others, Sidhartha Sen, a student leader, Shankar Sen, Dr. Mihir Sen and Kharuna Saha.

During the period, students, general people and members of Ansar of the district forged strong unity to wrest the independence from the clutches of Pakistanis.

Having trained youths started encountering the occupation soldiers. For the first time they encountered the soldiers in Baro Mari area under Kaimakanda thana in July 1971.

Another important face-to-face encounter took place at Bijoypur under Durgapur thana on August 14. In this battle three Pakistani soldiers were killed. After this fighting, General Niazi rushed to Netrakona town and held a public meeting at local Muktar Para field on August 22, 1971. Niazi tried to mobilise public support in favour of Pakistan, but all went in vain.

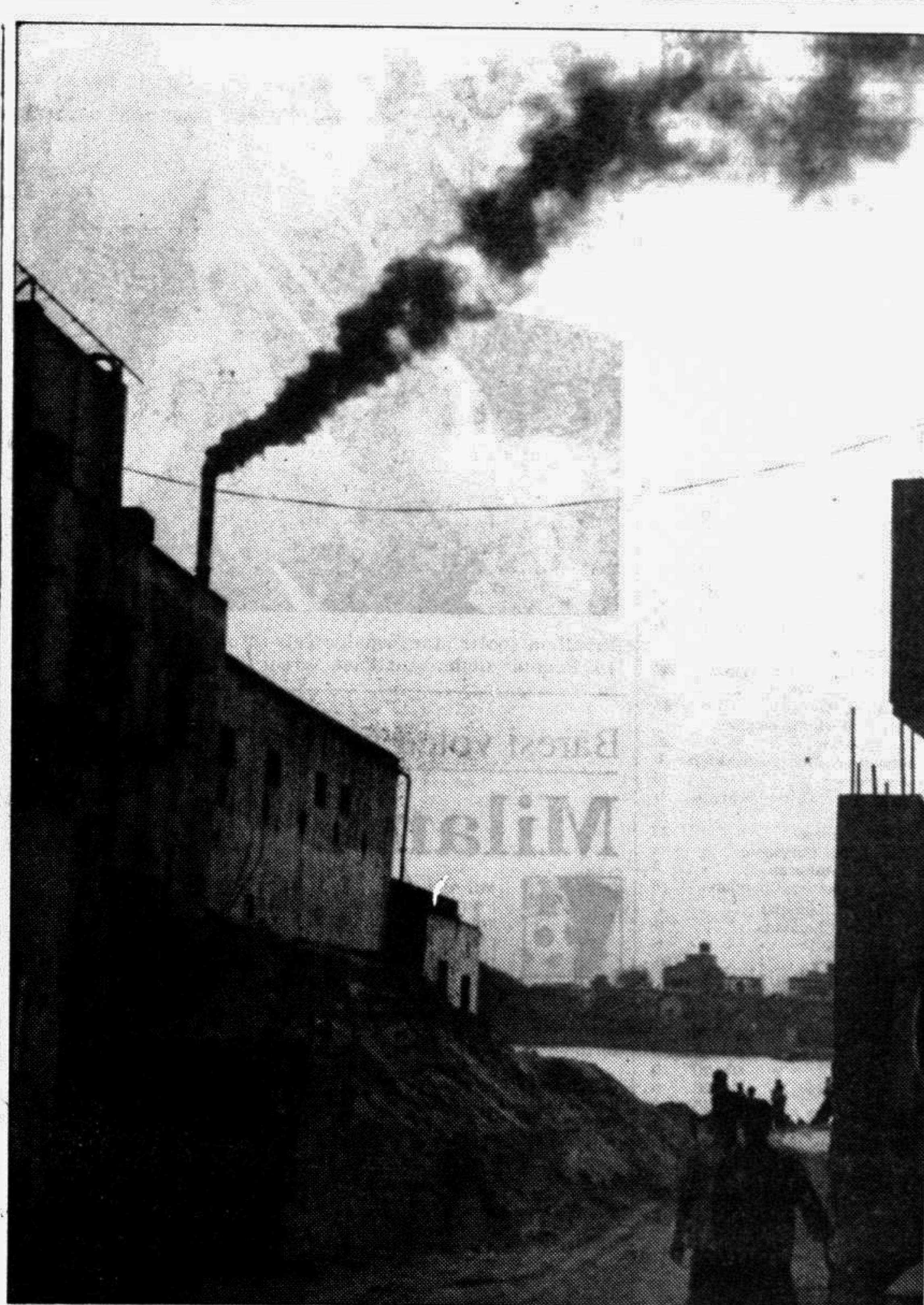
During the War of Liberation many freedom fighters and common people sacrificed their lives. Of them, the names of valiant freedom fighters Badi-

uzzaman Mukta and Dabir Uddin are worth mentioning. While gathering secret information, Badiuzzaman Mukta was arrested with grenade by the occupation Pakistani army. Mukta shouted 'We must be independent, Joy Bangla, Joy Bangla' before he was gunned down by the Pakistani army.

Mitali Sangha, a social organisation, has constructed a memorial paying respect to Badiuzzaman Mukta. People from all walks of life in the district visit the memorial to pay tributes to this martyred freedom fighter.

Valiant freedom fighter Dabir Uddin was also arrested by the occupation forces with grenade from the then sub-divisional headquarters. He was shot dead in Chalissha Bridge area under Sadar thana.

Netrakona was liberated after a fierce fighting in Krishni Fuli area at about 4 am on December 9. After this fighting the freedom fighters entered the town, much to the happiness and relief of the people.



Air pollution: Black smoke from one of the hundreds of mills and factories in Fatulla area of Narayanganj district is posing serious health hazard. The air pollution level is particularly high during the dry season. Reports of respiratory problems around these industrial units are also frequent. No law seems to be effective here.

— Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Mother of Bir Shrestha desires real taste of independence

RANGAMATI, Dec 17: Muktitun Nessa, octogenarian mother of Bir Shrestha Lance Naik Munshi Abdur Rouf, said here on Thursday that she had forgotten the unbearable pain of losing her only son as he embraced a heroic death killing enemies to liberate the country, reports BSS.

"He died like a hero, not like dogs and foxes," she told here in an interview while going back to Rangamati BDR sector headquarters after attending a reception accorded to the family members of martyrs of the Liberation War as part of a programme marking the Victory Day.

"Rouf was my only son — he made me a proud mother of lakhs of sons of this soil sacrificing his life for the independence of the country from the repression and clutches of Pakistani rulers, physically weak but mentally strong Muktitun Nessa said.

Millions of sons of the soil like mine shed their bloods to free the country. Today ours is an independent country but the dreams of the martyrs have not yet been fully materialised. We are getting the fruits of independence very slowly," she said. She prays to almighty Allah for materialisation of the dreams of the martyrs.

Bangladesh Rifles brought the proud mother of Munshi Abdur Rouf here on Thursday from oblivion from her Salamatpur village home in Bogamari thana of Pabna district under special arrangement to enable her to pay homage to her son's grave, ensuring her convenience.

A nephew of Muktitun Nessa, Munshi Ayub Ali, who accompanied her here from Faridpur, now looks after the widow and octogenarian mother of Bir Shrestha Munshi Abdur Rouf.

Shaheed Rouf was laid to eternal rest on an island near Burigahat in Naniarchar thana, surrounded by blue water of Kaptai Lake on April 20, 1971. Rouf embraced martyrdom in an encounter with Pakistani occupation army after killing two platoons of enemy soldiers and destroying their two launches and one speedboat loaded with arms and ammunition.

Muktitun Nessa went to the grave of her beloved son in a BDR speedboat on Thursday morning and placed wreaths there.

Earlier, Commander of Rangamati BDR Sector Col ANM Shahidullah also placed wreaths at the grave of the Bir Shrestha on behalf of the director general of BDR in military honour.

Reception to martyred FFs' families

NARAYANGANJ, Dec 17: The Narayanganj district administration accorded a reception to the members of the families of the martyred freedom fighters and disabled freedom fighters in connection with the celebration of the Victory Day on Thursday, reports BSS.

The reception held at the Shaheed Mukti Joddha hall was presided over by Abdur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner, Narayanganj.

The function was addressed, among others by Gias Uddin, Bir Protik, former General Secretary of Bangladesh Mukti Joddha Sangsad, Samiullah Milon, Deputy Commander of Narayanganj Mukti Joddha Sangsad, Sanaul Hoq, Police Super, and Almas Uddin Khan, father of Shaheed freedom fighter Zinnatul Hoq, ADC (General) and Berek Ullah Khan, ADM.

The speakers paid tribute to the martyred freedom fighters and urged the people to uphold the spirit of the liberation.

Intellectuals Day observed in dists

Martyred Intellectuals Day was observed in Narayanganj, Barguna and Kushtia on Tuesday with due solemnity, report agencies.

To mark the day, Barguna Press Club and Shishu Academy placed wreaths at the local monument in the morning.

Later on a discussion meeting was held at the press club auditorium with journalist Sanjib Das in the chair. Another discussion was held at the district bar council library.

Another report from Narayanganj adds: The day was observed in the district on Tuesday.

On the occasion, a discussion meeting was held at Hanif Khan auditorium of local press club with its president Habbur Rahman Badal in the chair.

Among others, former director of PIB Shamsul Huda, MA Hannan, Hanif Khan, Mah-

bubur Rahman, Abdul Khaleq, Shamsul Islam and Monirul Islam spoke on the occasion.

City BNP also organised a discussion meeting, addressed among others, by Atahar Hossain, Abu Al Yusuf Khan, Amanuddin Aman and Zakir Hossain Chowdhury. The meeting was presided over by MA Mazid.

Bangabandhu Parishad, Kushtia unit, organised a discussion meeting at its office premises.

President of the Parishad Motiur Rahman Laltu presided over the meeting.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Prof Abul Hasan Choudhury, Prof Sarwar Murshed and Advocate Ashraf Ali.

Islamic University also observed the Martyred Intellectual Day. A discussion meeting was held on this occasion.

Concern over growing trend of terrorism

By Staff Correspondent

Maj Gen (ret'd) Subed Ali Bhuiyan recently said the growing incidences of murder, snatching and terrorists activities has taken a serious turn and pushing the country towards ruin.

He said the people of the country are now hostage to the terrorists, but the government and concerned administration are reluctant and not taking steps to address the criminal activities.

Addressing as the chief guest to the retired soldiers at Juranpur in Dadukandi thana of Comilla district, Gen Bhuiyan asked the government to rise above petty party interest and come forward to eliminate terrorism from the society.

On increase of terrorism, he said the government's drive to root out terrorism from the

country could not bring any positive result as the government failed to rise above party interest.

Turning to local problems, he said the people of Dadukandi are now kept hostage to the terrorists and expressed the determination to eliminate terrorism from the area. "My first task, if I get the opportunity, will be to free the people from the hands of terrorists," he added.

Bhuiyan said though the number of the terrorists is handful, but they could dare to commit crime as people are not organised. He told the meeting that he came to politics with the mentality to serve people and hoped that he with the help of people would turn Dadukandi thana into a model one by uprooting terrorism.

Youth killed in bomb attack in C' Nawabganj

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAI NAWABGANJ, Dec 17: A young man was killed and at least ten others were injured, two of them seriously, in a bomb attack on Monday at Rasiknagar of Nayalavange union under Shibganj thana.

The dead was identified as Ekrumul Haque, 25, of the same village. Seriously injured Nazrul Islam, 35, and Badruzzaman, 20, were rushed to hospital.

Witnesses said when a group of assailants hurled bombs on the house of Nayalavange union parishad chairman Md. Ashrafal on the day, Ekrumul Haque was killed on the spot.

A tense situation was prevailing in the area following the incident.