

National

News snaps

Recognition of Feb 21 celebrated

NETRAKONA, Dec 20: The UNESCO recognition of historic February 21 as the International Mother Tongue Day was celebrated here, as elsewhere in the country, on December 7, amidst great enthusiasm, reports BSS.

To mark the UNESCO recognition, different political parties including Awami League, socio-cultural organisations, educational institutions and district administration organised colourful processions, discussion meetings, seminars and musical soirees based on patriotic songs. Netrakona Municipality decorated the main roads and islands here with colourful posters, banners and festoons inscribed with various slogans highlighting the significance of the International Mother Tongue Day.

Shrimps looted

BAGERHAT, Dec 20: Armed men looted a huge quantity of shrimps from an enclosure in Fakirhat thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said the gang numbering about 15 looted shrimps worth about Tk 80,000 of the enclosure of Anadiram and Subhash Mondal of village Hosla after confining its guard into a room. The hoodlums also destroyed shrimp fries worth about Tk 1.50 lakh pouring poison into the enclosure. A case was filed with the police.

Acreage of farmland decreases

GOPALGANJ, Dec 20: The acreage of farmland in all the five thanas has been decreasing with construction of more dwelling houses to accommodate increasing number of people, reports UNB.

According to a survey conducted by a local NGO, the popularity of nuclear family as well as polygamy is responsible for grabbing a good quantity of farmlands for construction of houses. The study conducted in 24 villages of Sadar thana showed that 40 per cent farmers and 60 per cent rural people constructed their new houses on arable land.

Youth with firearms arrested

KHULNA, Dec 20: Police arrested a young man, with two firearms, from a house in the city on Dec 8, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police raided the house of Murad at TB Cross Road. They arrested Ranga Delwar and recovered a foreign made gun and another shutter gun from his possession. Other members of the house managed to escape the police raid. A case was filed in the local thana in this connection.

SSC examinee electrocuted

FENI, Dec 20: An SSC examinee has been electrocuted at Uttar Kowtali village in Parshuram thana, reports UNB.

Police said Saju Mia, 16, son of Nurul Islam, died after a live electric wire snapped and touched his body on Dec 3. The accident occurred at a neighbour's house, where Saju accompanied a bridal party.

Police constable killed

HABIGANJ, Dec 20: A police constable has been killed by unknown assailants 3 km off the town, reports UNB.

Official sources said some unidentified assailants killed Sudhir Mohan Roy, 48, a constable of the court station police outpost, in Kalardoba area on Wednesday. His body was recovered on Thursday. Following a case with Baniarchar Police Station, police arrested three suspects who are activists of two BNP front organisations — Jobo Dal and Chhahar Dal. Jobo Dal and JCD supporters demonstrated in the town Thursday night against the arrest of their men in the Sudhir murder case.

Housewife raped

BAGERHAT, Dec 20: A young housewife was allegedly raped by some terrorists at Mulghar village in Fakirhat thana early Friday, reports UNB.

Police and local people said Awal Talukder and Nurul Islam of the same village picked up the housewife of a day-labourer. They took her at nearby a garden and raped her repeatedly. The husband recovered his wife from the spot and admitted her to Fakirhat Thana Health Complex. A case was filed with the police in this regard.

Three smugglers arrested

JOYPURHAT, Dec 20: BDR jawans arrested three smugglers along with smuggled Indian sugar from Panchbibi border Friday night after a clash with them, reports UNB.

Official sources said several hundred smugglers bringing sugar into Bangladesh locked in clashes with the jawans of 5-Battalion BDR near frontier Hatchhola area following seizure of the smuggled item at midnight. BDR fired a shot in the air to disperse the mob and brought the situation under control. They also seized huge sugar sacks and arrested three smugglers.

Scarcity of X-ray films

PATUAKHALI, Dec 20: The poor patients in three thanas have been depriving of proper treatment facility due to want of X-ray films, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said supply of X-ray films from the central store to the three hospitals remained stopped since last three months. The hospitals are: Patuakhali General Hospital, Kalapara and Bauphal Thana Health Complexes. Poor patients are not getting proper treatment, as they are not in a position to buy X-ray films from outside. Officials said local authorities called a tender in a bid to buy X-ray films from outside and sent it to the higher authorities for approval. But the authorities are yet to give any reply to the proposal.

Bheramara Awami League meeting

BHERAMARA, Dec 20: A meeting of Bheramara Thana Awami League was held at its office on Tuesday last, reports BSS.

The meeting was presided over by Abu Bakar Siddique, President of Bheramara Thana Awami League. The speakers in the meeting called upon the opposition parties to maintain sanctity of the holy Ramadan and refrain from harassing the fasting people. The meeting also called upon them to shun the path of destructive politics.

Judicial Employees' Welfare meeting

MANIKGANJ, Dec 20: The 10th Annual General Meeting of Manikganj District Judicial Employees' Welfare Association was held at District Judge's Court office recently, reports BSS.

The meeting was presided over by Md Akbar Hossain. Krishna Debnath, District and Sessions Judge, Manikganj was present in the meeting as the chief guest while ASM Jahurul Huq, Additional District and Sessions Judge was the special guest. A 19-member executive committee was formed in the meeting. Md Akbar Hossain, Md Aminul Huq and Md Wajuru were elected as President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively for the year 2000.

Tender Notice
6th Time Tender

University of Dhaka: Fresh sealed tenders in Dhaka University form "Tender for works" are hereby invited from the enlisted Contractors (Civil) of Dhaka University for the works "Re-construction Road in front of MLSS quarter at Shib Bari" of Dhaka University and will be received by the undersigned up to 12.00 Noon on 30th December '99 and opened on the same day at 12.15 PM in presence of the contractors who may remain present. Contractors will have to deposit as earnest money a sum of Tk 3,000/- only in Demand Draft or Pay Order from any scheduled Bank of Bangladesh in favour of the undersigned. Tender form, schedule and other particulars may be had from the office of the undersigned on all working days except on the date fixed for submitting the tender on payment of Tk 100/- (non-refundable) to the Janata Bank, Dhaka University branch after obtaining permission from the undersigned. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason. The contractors are liable to abide by the decision of the authority. Contractor should write the name of work and their firm's name on the envelope clearly.

Matilal Sarker
Executive Engineer (4)
University of Dhaka

National

Arsenic panic in Chandpur dist

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Dec 20: Public health is being threatened in the district due to increasing arsenic contamination in ground water in both town and rural areas.

So arsenic has created panic in all seven thanas.

According to Chandpur Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) sources, about five lakh people are attacked with arsenic related diseases. About 80 per cent tubewells water in different thanas, are more or less arsenic contaminated. DPHE, Chandpur office has already tested the proportion of arsenic pollution in tubewells in different areas of the district.

Arsenic contamination in tubewells' waters have been found in large number in Faridganj, Haziganj, Matlab, Shaharasti, Kachua and part of Chandpur.

A large number of people have been suffering in these thanas from arsenic related diseases for a long time. About two thousand tubewells in these areas have already been sealed off marking red and with warning signboard. Some other more tubewells are likely to be sealed off very soon. DPHE has expressed that dangerous level of arsenic contents in water is above .05 mg.

During examination of water sample from different tubewells arsenic contents are found below the danger level which is upto .02 mg in some areas.

BSS from Manikganj reports: A daylong workshop on "Survey Programme to Solve the Arsenic Problem" was held last week at Singair Thana Parishad auditorium, reports BSS.

Badirul Rahman, Secretary Local Government Division, was present in the workshop as the chief guest while Farid Uddin Ahmed Miah, Director, Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project was the special guest.

The daylong workshop, sponsored by Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project and assisted by Singair thana administration, was participated by all chairmen and members of 11 union parishads in Singair thana and local officials.

The workshop was presided over by Khandakar Raqibur Rahman, Thana Nirbahi Officer, Singair.

UNB from Meherpur says: Country's first Arsenic-Iron Removal Treatment Plant went into experimental operation here on Sunday.

The plant was set up at cost of Tk 7 crore with financial assistance from Netherlands government at Shahid Shamsuzzoha park.

Local Pourasabha Chairman Mutasim Billah alias Matu inaugurated the plant.

Speaking on the occasion, the chairman said the government perceiving the disastrous consequence of arsenic has decided to set up such plants in different affected areas of the country.



Mustard cultivation has gained popularity among the farmers of Magura district. Photo shows a farmer of village Aralia in the Sadar thana working in his land expecting a good production.

—Star photo

A journey to Cox's Bazar in winter season

COX'S BAZAR, Dec 20: The longest sea-beach Cox's Bazar bearing Englishman Captain Hiram Cox's name, with its abundant natural beauty and resources resplendently attracts tourists and travellers particularly at the advent of winter when both local and foreign men, women of all ages dart to the sandy stretch ever-kissing the waves breaking off and on endlessly from the huge and vast blue sea-our dearest Bay of Bengal.

The tourists' heaven as Cox's Bazar is affectionately called can be reached by road and air, offers accommodation in hotels, motels, dormitories, cottages, rest and guest houses strewn all around the main beach point and affordable to all including students and youths at relatively moderate rates.

Secured and protected with special arrangements, there are extra-care vigilance for se bathers and swimmers.

Dipping and swimming is desirable and recommended only during the high tide to avoid occasional accidents.

Besides being blown and

blown by the sea-breeze pickable cat-walks, driving along towards the eastern-most beach-point Teknaf, the border town on the River NAAF demarcating Bangladesh and Myanmar overlooks the hilly UMA range of neighbouring Myanmar (Burma).

In between, the Himachari Fall flows down into the sea against hillock 'ENONI' is an adventure by itself.

The beach-town, the abode of ethnic Rakhaines tracing their origin from the Arakanese Maung tribe, are Buddhists have their KEY ANG (Pagoda) four hundred years old perched on the slope of the hill, is adorned with the brass statue of holy "Buddha" when visited, a saffron-robed Monk blesses you.

Along the Rakhain hamlet, the cottage crafts and their traditional hand-woven colourful robes and stoles will invariably steal the mind of a visitor and allure. Fetching one or the other piece, as a memento is a charm of the visit along with the conch-shell necklace and armlet is unavoidable.

Scientists and ecologists have warned not to allow predate the precious island like a pearl belonging to Bangladesh, as intrusion by bipeds might destroy the coral formation surfaced by layers of sands blown and flown by occasional wave and wind action. It is reachable, as well, by river transports. —BSS Feature

Motia says

Freedom Fighters remained cornered for 21 years

LOUHAJANG, (Munshiganj) Dec 20: Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury said here recently the foundation of infrastructure, laid by the present government, would usher in a new era of development in the next millennium, reports BSS.

She was speaking as the chief guest at a discussion on

Bomb hurled at house of CCC commissioner

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 20: Residence of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Ward Commissioner MA Naser in Jamal Khan area in the city came under bomb attack on Friday morning, police and family sources said.

The commissioner was not at his house when a home-made bomb was hurled.

Police rushed to the spot soon after the incident. None was arrested in this connection.

organised by Louhajang Thana Mukti Joddha Sangsads at the Upazila ground here.

Motia Chowdhury said soon after the independence of the country the government, led by Bangabandhu, had reconstructed the war-ravaged country. She said, the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during the last three and a half years has strengthened the foundation of development.

She said for 21 years the people of independent Bangladesh could not enjoy the fruits of victory of the country as the anti-liberation forces were in the limelight while the freedom fighters remained cornered.

Ziaur Rahman honoured the razakars while Ershad made trickery with the freedom fighters, she alleged and said now the defeated forces have allied with Begum Zia to grab the state power by any means.

She said the government did not reduce development allocation for the freedom fighters, rather, she said, the allocation has been raised to Taka 14 crore from Taka 8 crore. The minis

ter called upon all pro-liberation and patriotic people to remain alert to foil all conspiracies being hatched by Golam Azam and his mentors.

Dhali Moazzem Hossain presided over the meeting, while Segupta Yasmin, MP, freedom fighter Noor-E-Alam, Nazrul Islam Khan, Fakir Abdul Hamid, Abul Bashar, Jahangir Alam Fakir, Abdur Rab Khan and Mahbubul Alam Barhak spoke.

Girl dies after taking poison unknowingly

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Dec 20: A baby girl died after she accidentally took poison at village Boroi under Sadar thana on Saturday.

The victim was identified as Sohagi, 6, daughter of Alim Molla.

Family sources said the baby unknowingly drank the poison, which was stored in a bottle.

Natore was liberated on December 21

From Anwar Ali

areas of the northern region. But efforts to occupy Natore was thwarted by our brave freedom fighters.

Battle of Khobaria: On December 8, '71, our freedom fighters fought face to face against the forces comprising of Pak army and razakars at Khobaria of Madhuagarh village under Sadar thana.

The enemy forces confronted a surprise attack by the freedom fighters while they were passing through the Khobaria river with heavy arms on board 15 to 16 boats.

The villagers say that Khobaria had been turned into a battlefield on that day. The Pak forces sustained heavy losses in the two-day long battle. A large number of Pak armymen and razakars were killed and about 12 boats were sunk. On the other hand, Abdur Razak, a freedom fighter was killed. The place was full of dead bodies when some enemies fled from the battlefield.

Battle of Augdigha: This battle was a fierce one, launched by freedom fighters under leadership of Commander Alek Uddin. It took place in Augdigha Primary School area on December 11. Our freedom fighters defeated the enemy forces within five hours since 11 am that day. Being informed of the presence of Pak army and razakars at the school, local freedom fighters laid siege to the school and fought face to face with enemy forces. The battle left nine razakars dead. The Pak army, however, managed to flee away.

Many freedom fighters of Natore like Abdur Rahman Khan Chowdhury alias Selim, Saiful Islam, Mujibur Rahman Reza, Golam Rabbanji Ranju, Babul Sabin Pramanik, Akkas, Samad and Omar Ali were killed during the Liberation War. Many other freedom fighters including late Sankar Govinda Chowdhury, Dr Mubarak Ali, Kh Abu Ali, Advocate Sajedur Rahman, Advocate Quamrul Islam, Advocate

Several thousand Pak army men from the northern region led by Major General Hussain Shah surrendered to the allied forces chief Lieutenant General Dighapatia.

The Pakistani forces surrendered to the allied forces comprising of freedom fighters and Indian army on December 21, 1971, at Dighapatia camp.



Defeated Pakistani army officers surrendering arms to the members of Allied forces at Dighapatia camp in Natore on December 21.

— Photo: Courtesy RU Archive

