

# Allotted khas lands under illegal occupation

From KM Rezaul Hoque

GAIBANDHA, Jan 28: A total of 4,625 bighas of khas lands were allotted to 1,113 landless families of the district in the last ten years, although most of the families are yet to receive the plots.

According to official sources, some 512 landless people of Ballamghar, Mollerchar and Kamranj unions under Sadar thana received allotment of 2,979.27 bighas of lands. But the families are yet to get the possession of the plots.

A total of 116 landless families of Kochua, Kamalerpara and Jumarbari unions under Shaghata thana received allotment of 149.57 bighas of khas lands. Out of that only 60 families of Jumarbari union received possession but the re-

maining families are yet to get possession. Local influential people have occupied many bighas of lands, which were allotted to landless people. Several cases were filed in this connection following series of clashes between unauthorised occupants and landless peasants.

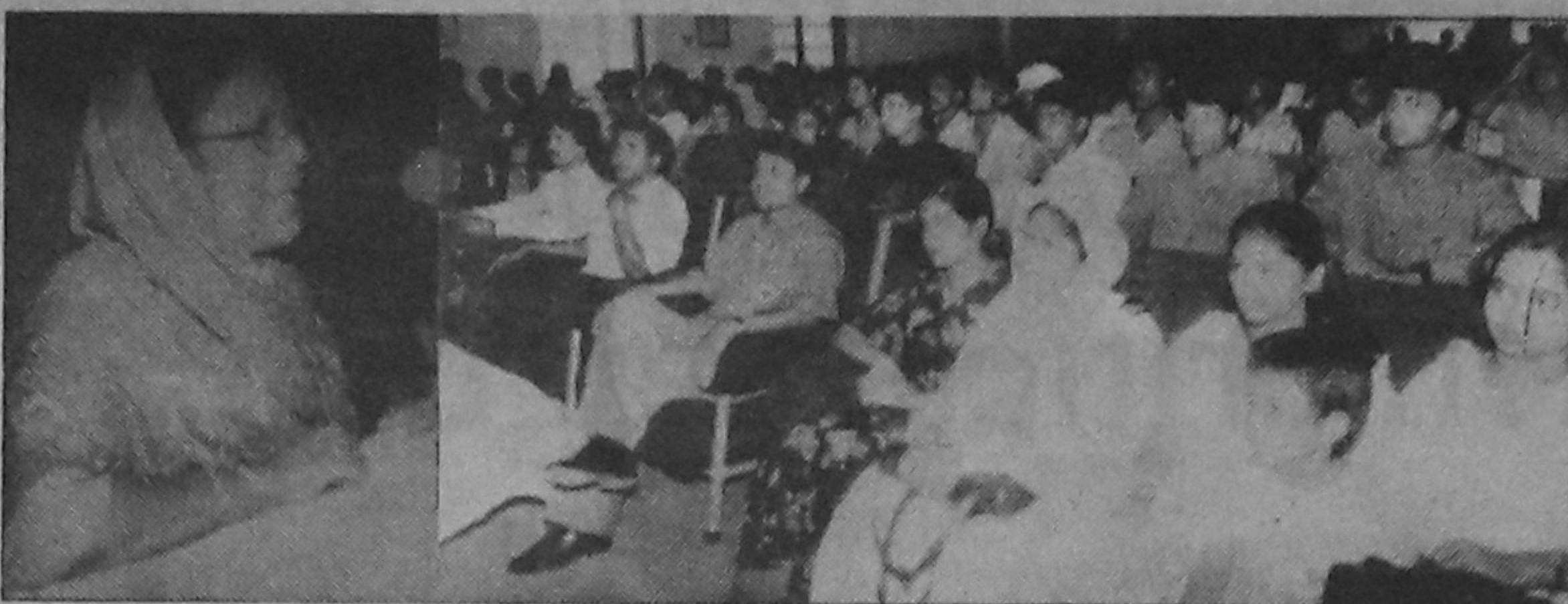
A total of 792 bighas of khas lands were allotted to 132 landless families of Kanchibari, Fulchhari, Arendabari and Falzpur unions under Fulchhari thana, but none of them is yet to receive possession.

In Gobindganj thana, 170.44 bighas of khas lands were allotted to 127 destitute families of Shampara and Katabari union. 534.13 bighas

of lands were allotted among 228 families of Bamondanga, Tarapur and Haripur unions under Sunderganj thana. They simply received the documents.

Jatiya Krishak Samity has been fighting for the last three years to recover the allotted khas lands from the possession of influential people. Aminul Islam Golap, president of the organisation, said they appealed to authorities concerned to recover the lands, but no 'effective' step was taken in this regard.

The deputy commissioner, however, recently directed the TNOs concerned to take immediate steps to recover the occupied khas lands, which were allotted to landless people.



State Minister for Children and Women Affairs Jinnatunnessa Talukder addressing a reception meeting for the freshers recently at Rajshahi Government College. — Star photo

# 13 killed in Gopalganj last year

From Alimuzzaman Miah

GOPALGANJ, Jan 28: At least 13 persons were killed in five thanas of Gopalganj district last year, police sources said.

Of the killings, land dispute: 6, UP election campaign: 3, previous enmity: 3 and rape: 1. One person named Anwar Hossain, 32, son of Idris Ali of Dinajpur District who served under China Road and Bridge Corporation and working at Tungpara in Gopalganj district was brutally killed by the miscreants on January 8 midnight.

Some miscreants were suddenly attacked Anwar Hossain with sharp weapons and stabbed him indiscriminately when he was sleeping. He died instantly.

A case was filed with Tungpara PS in this connection. Three persons were killed in a clash between supporters of incumbent UP chairman and former UP chairman at Palashi village under Kasiani thana on April 5 morning.

Witnesses said two rival groups used sharp weapons in the clash. As a result three persons died.

The deceaseds were identified as Zafar Chowdhury, 25, Abdur Razzak, 52, and Sharfuddin, 25.

A case was filed with Kasiani PS in this connection.

One person named Sunil Chowdhury, 50, a night guard of Gopalganj Girls' High School was killed by miscreants on May 24 night. The night guard was found dead in a classroom in the morning. His hands and legs were tied with rope.

Police declined to comment on the motive of the murder for

the interest of investigation. A case was filed in this connection.

Morzina Begum, 35, was killed when a group of villagers locked in a clash over felling a tree on a disputed land at Char-Tala village under Sadar thana on June 22 morning. The woman received severe head injuries. She died on the spot.

A case was filed in this connection.

Monirunessa, 60 was killed as villagers locked in clash over a petty issue at Borfa village under Gopalganj sadar thana on June 23 morning.

The old woman received stab injuries and she died on way to hospital.

A case was filed in this connection.

A businessman was gunned down at Chapail village along the West Bank of the River Modhumati in the district on July 4 morning.

Shah Alam Biswas, 35, son of Abdus Satter Biswas of village Manikdah under Gopalganj Sadar thana was gunned down by armed terrorist.

The terrorists opened fired on Shah Alam Biswas and he died on the spot.

A case was filed in this connection.

One person named Shahjan, 60, son of late Abdul Mazed village of Bonkua under Kotali-para thana of Gopalganj district was killed as a group of villagers attacked him with sharp weapons on August 19. He died way to hospital.

Police said the attack was a sequel to previous enmity.

A case was filed in this connection.

One person named Bobita, 13, a girl was raped and killed

by miscreants at Satpar village under Gopalganj Sadar thana on September 13 morning.

Police said Bobita, daughter of Monidranath Biswas was picked up by some miscreants and taken to a nearby place. She was raped and killed.

A case was filed in this connection.

One person named Enamul Haque Sikder was stabbed to death by miscreants at Kagh-danga village under Katalipara thana on October 12.

Family sources said Enamul Haque Sikder, 35, son of late Mooruddin Sikder and his associates came under attack by a group of miscreants in the evening. Miscreants stabbed him indiscriminately. He died on the spot.

A case was filed in this connection.

One person named Rafiq Gazi, 45, son of Maktul Gazi was killed in a clash between two rival groups at Char Urli village under Gopalganj Sadar thana on October 13. Police said, Rafiq Gazi died on the spot.

A case was filed in this connection.

An old man named Sirajul Haque Mollah, 60, was killed by cousins at village Arua Kandi under Kasiani thana on October 15.

Family sources said Sirajul Haque Mollah was stabbed to death allegedly by his cousins.

The miscreants attacked him with sharp weapons. The old man died on the spot. Local people have attributed the murder to land dispute.

A case was filed in this connection.



Kushtia farmers cultivating banana on a large scale now as it has become a profitable agricultural product. Photo shows growers carrying banana by rickshaws to a wholesale market at Luxmipur, 13 miles off Kushtia town. — Star photo

# Black smoke, kilns causing environmental degradation

GAIBANDHA, Jan 28: Black smoke emitted by vehicles and indiscriminate setting up of kilns, most of which are fueled by firewood instead of coal, are causing environmental degradation in the district.

Besides, bad odour caused by acid burning in jewellery shops and sounds of hydraulic horns of vehicles and loud speakers are also posing serious threat to public health.

Most of transports, including buses, trucks and auto rickshaws, are plying on roads without fitness. These vehicles emit black smoke, polluting the air.

Besides, the vehicles are using hydraulic horns ignoring the government ban, causing health hazard to people, espe-

cially children and old people.

During dry season, a section of people indiscriminately set up kilns. Most owners use firewood as fuel in brick fields, posing threat to trees.

Moreover, these kilns are causing damage to arable land in the area.

Bad odour caused by acid burning in jewellery shops is causing health hazard in the town. Goldsmiths use for making ornaments.

Indiscriminate use of loud speakers is causing sound pollution in the town. Every day a large number of loud speakers are being used for different kinds of announcements, much to the suffering of town dwellers.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to immediate steps to stop the mal practices to save the environment.

## Larma urges govt Rehabilitate Bengali settlers outside CHT

KHAGRACHHARI, Jan 28: Chairman of CHT Regional Council Jyotirindhra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma here on Tuesday said peace was not established in the hills after two years of signing of the CHT Peace Treaty as the treaty was not implemented properly, reports UNB.

He urged the government to rehabilitate the Bengali settlers outside Chittagong Hill Tracts. Terrorist activities and use of illegal arms have been increasing in the region day by day and the opposition parties, even a section of the ruling party, are involved in the movement to scarp the agreement, he said while addressing a public meeting at Ramgar Town Hall on Tuesday.

The CHT Regional Council Chairman said the principle laws of the Regional and District Councils are yet to be implemented thoroughly and the Land Commission, formed to solve land dispute, was not activated.

Larma also claimed that the repatriated Chakma refugees from India and JSS members were not rehabilitated justly.

## Call to resist anti-liberation forces

KHULNA, Jan 28: Speakers at a meeting of Khulna branch of the Muktyjudder Chetana Bastabayan and Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Jatiya Samannaya Committee on January 23 called upon all the pro-liberation forces to unitedly resist the anti-liberation elements who were now out to destroy the spirit of the liberation war, reports BSS.

The meeting was held at the local Shaheed Hadis Park to raise voice against the Pakistani collaborators who are still active to destroy the spirit of the Liberation War. Presided over by convener of Khulna Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee Advocate Abdul Halim, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Awami League leader and MP Begum Monnujan Sufian, Principal Wahidur Rahman, A F M Maksudur Rahman, Dr Baharul Alam, Dr Naima Kabir and Advocate Mina Mizanur Rahman.

## Enquiry demanded

From Akhteruzzaman

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 28: People of Saibari and its adjoining areas have demanded an enquiry immediately into the alleged irregularities, use of sub-standard materials and failure in maintaining the schedule of construction work of groyne covering 416-metre area along the bank of the Jamuna.

Local Water Development Board (WDB) is implementing the project. Eighty-seven per cent of the project is being financed by Asian Development Bank, while the remaining 17 per cent cost will be borne by the government.

However, the work is not progressing as per work schedule, alleged local people. But WDB already paid 50 per cent bill of the contractors.

## 155 killed in Feni road mishaps last year

From Our Correspondent

FENI, Jan 28: At least 155 people were killed and 604 injured in 113 road accidents in the district last year.

According to police, 70 per cent road accidents occurred during the period on busy Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

According to an unofficial survey, about 50 per cent road accidents occurred for reckless driving.

## Property worth Tk 12 lakh gutted in Feni

From Our Correspondent

FENI, Jan 28: Two fires gutted property worth about Taka 12 lakh in Ranirhat and Masterpara areas in the town recently.

In the first incident at Ranirhat four shops were gutted, causing damage to valuable worth Taka two lakh.

In the second incident, a fire, originated from a short circuit from the house of Narayan Sen Gupta, gutted four houses at Masterpara. The fire damaged property worth Taka about ten lakh.

Firefighters rushed to the spot and took an hour to bring the situation under control.

# Tale of some rural women who emerge as labour force

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, Jan 28: Here is a tale of some rural women who have emerged as labour force.

Angur, Archana, Fahima, Jarina, Razia, Halimon and Saharana earn their living by working hard from dawn to dusk.

They leave houses early in the morning and return after sunset. All of them are members of Labour Contracting Society (LCS) under Local Government Engineering Department (LGED). With spade, leveler and other instruments they remain engaged in repairing and maintenance of rural roads.

Whenever rural roads are partially damaged or become unfit for movement, Angur, Archana, Jarina or others such women rush there to repair the same. Actually they are the part and parcel in rural life. But all of them are vulnerable. Every body was married one or two times or more, but their luck did not favour to live happily with their husbands or other family members. At one stage they were compelled to leave the houses and at one stage they became LCS member.

Angur Khatun, 27, is a member of LCS, working on Salkupa-Garaganj road. When asked she said that her father Ajuddin Mollah of village Brahimpur in Salkupa thana arranged her marriage with Abdur Rahman of Beparipara in Jhenidah municipal area at the age of 18. When Angur was carrying, Abdur sent her to her father's house. After giving birth a son she went to Abdur. But she was denied by her husband. In the meantime Abdur allegedly took second wife. Finding no other alternative she started begging here and there. Her brothers then tied her knot with an old man of Manikganj district which could not sustain for a long period. At last she joined as a LCS member with LGED.

Fate of Archana Rani Das, 25, is no different. Her father Sukumar Das of village Chandipur in the same thana arranged her marriage at the age of ten. Then she did not understand what is husband, what is family and what is life as it is now.

When Archana started living with her husband Foni Das at Magura town, Foni allegedly started torturing her. He took wine regularly and injured his wife by blade on parts of her body. Once Foni pushed knife into Archana's belly, but luckily she was saved. Then she left Magura in a critical stage as she was carrying. Later on she gave birth to a son. Now her son is six years old. Soon after Archana had left Magura, her husband Foni married another girl.

Halimon, 26, is another victim of deprivation. Halimon's father Adiluddin Mollah, who was a day labourer at village Gobindapur in Salkupa thana. He arranged marriage of Halimon with Jinnah of village Al-fapur in the same thana at the age of 15. She had two sisters.

When she became pregnant Jinnah allegedly forced her to leave his house and married for the fourth time. Finding no other alternative Hal-

imoned left her husband's house. Now she has been residing at her father's house.

Tale of Jarina Khatun, 32, of village Kabirpur in the same thana is nothing new. She was married to Azimuddin, a day labourer at village Gobindapur in Salkupa thana. After giving birth to a son and a daughter her husband died. Jarina's brothers handed her to another day labourer at the same village. But the fate of Jarina was similar. Her second husband also died. She became hopeless and helpless.

The LCS members were doing their duty on Salkupa-Garaganj road at that time.

Regarding social barrier and other issues they said that a section of religious leaders and village landlords discouraged them. But they did not refrain from their work as they be-

lieved that females are not less qualified than male in all respect.

To prove this belief they came outside their houses to stand on their own feet.

Talking to this correspondent some LCS members said that they have been earning Taka 750 every month and they deposit Taka two hundred more with their respective bank accounts. With the money they have been maintaining their livelihood.

They also said that the young generation especially school and college going students and non-government organisation activists encourage them as they are engaged in nation building activities.

Saffur Rahman, Thana Engineer of LGED Salkupa said that 33 LCS members are involved in his thana who have been contributing to the social development.

Many LCS members are engaged in maintenance of rural roads.

The roads which were unfit for movement a few years back are now quite fit even in the rainy season. This was because of Angur, Archana, Halimon, Jarina and others. But they are sometimes by a group of village landlords or hoodlums. Recently some notorious people of village Baroipara under Salkupa thana tortured some LCS members physically, alleged some LCS members. But local authorities of LGED did not take any legal step against the criminals.

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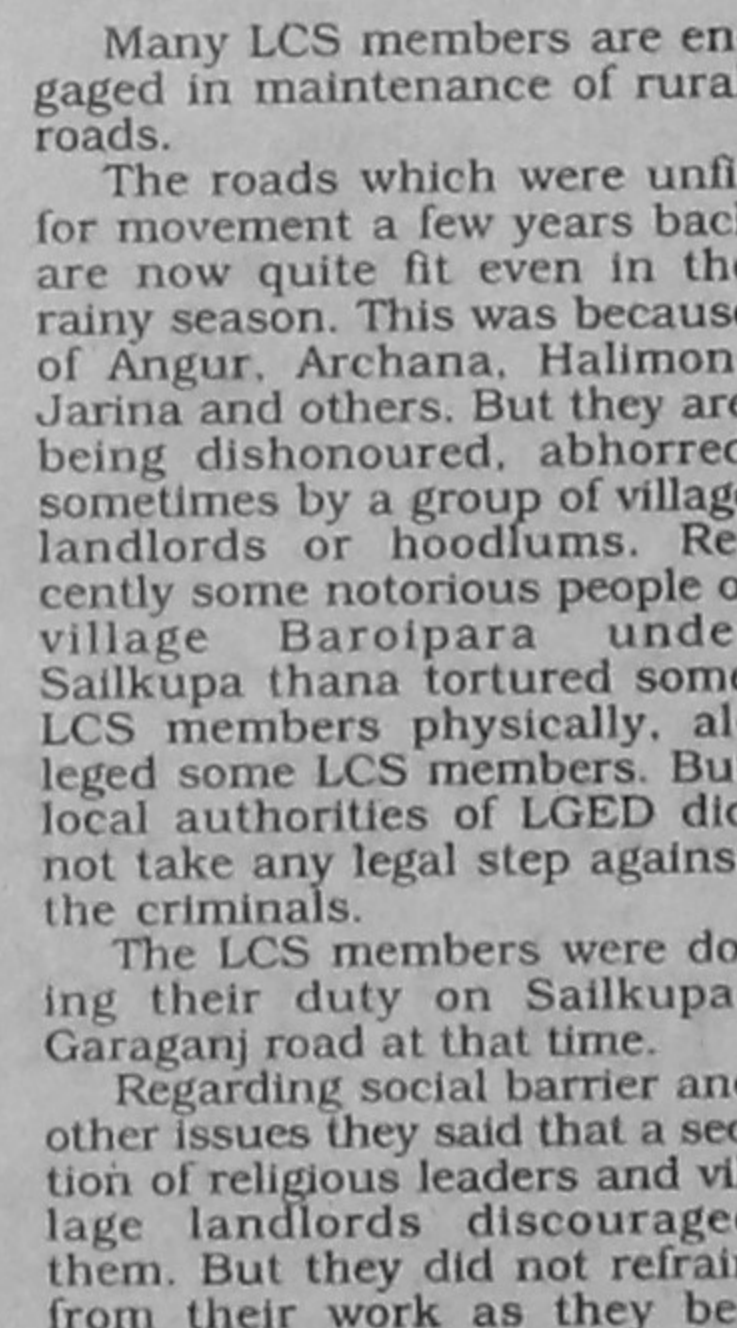
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lieved that females are not less qualified than male in all respect.

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Halimon



Archana

## Thousands suffer from cold in N districts

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 28: Thousands of distressed people have been suffering from the current severe cold wave in 16 districts under Rajshahi division.

These distressed people of nearly eight lakh families have no permanent shelters and winter clothes. These landless people, who have migrated to towns from villages, usually live in slums, footpaths, bus terminals and railway platforms. Each of family earns Taka 25 on average a day.

However, government and various social organisations distributed warm clothes among the distressed people.

## Ferry link road work progressing

MANIKGANJ, Jan 28: The construction of Uthuli-Nali-Paturia Ferry Link Road is in full swing, reports BSS.

Roads and Highways Department is implementing the construction of the six-kilometre long road at a cost of Taka 28 crore.

Besides earth and brick work, the scheme includes construction of a bridge and nine culverts.

The distance between Aricha and Daulatdia will be minimised when the ferry ghat will be shifted from Aricha to Paturia after construction of the ferry link road.

# News snaps

## Mustard cultivation scheme

NETRAKONA, Jan 28: A total of 10,500 hectares have been brought under mustard cultivation in 10 thanas in the current Rabi season, reports BSS.

Netrakona District Agriculture Extension Departments (AED) office sources said the production target of mustard has been fixed at 9,450 metric tons.

Field workers of AED have been rendering field-level service for making the mustard cultivation programme a success, official source added.

## Bus skids off road

JHALAKATI, Jan 28: A bus skidded off the road and tumbled into a ditch in Chhatrakanda area on Jhalakati-Projpur road on Tuesday leaving 19 passengers injured, reports UNB.

Police said the accident occurred when driver of the Projpur-bound bus from Barisal lost his control over the steering. The injured were admitted to Jhalakati Adhunik Hospital and Rajapur thana health complex. Six of the critically injured were identified as Swapan, 30, Mofazzal, 40, Sufia Begum, 30, Rehana Begum, 35, Mahmuda Akhter, 25, and Saiful Islam, 14.



Face of child labour: Helal, a 10-year old boy of village Juranpur in Sirajganj district pulling a rickshaw in the town. — Star photo

## Boro farming programme

RANGPUR, Jan 28: Over 4,84,000 hectares of land in eight districts of greater Rangpur and Dinajpur will be brought under Boro cultivation this season with a production target of 9,20,170 mts, reports UNB.

Six other districts are Kurigram, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh. District-wise breakup of the lands: Rangpur 81,700 hectares, Gaibandha 84,600, Kurigram 63,300, Lalmonirhat 35,100, Nilphamari 56,200, Dinajpur 1,12,400, Thakurgaon 36,100, Panchagarh 14,900 hectares.

## Students yet to get textbooks

BAGERHAT, Jan 28: Although one month of their academic year has already elapsed, students of 1,149 primary schools in the district are yet to get their textbooks, reports UNB.

Sources at the Primary Education office said so far 20 per cent textbooks have been distributed among students of 602 government, 484 registered, 32 community and 31 satellite schools. As part of its programme to provide primary school students with free textbooks, the government has allotted 5,51,784 pieces of new books for 183,126 students, but of them only 1,05,875 books so far reached here. Of the books, which reached the District Education office, there were no books of class II.

## Erosion of moral values

PATUAKHALI, Jan 28: Screening of obscene films at Khatakhali and its adjacent villages in Golachupa thana has become a huge criminal business, contributing to erosion of moral values, reports UNB.

Alauddin Miah, a teacher of Patuakhali Jubilee High School, said a vested quarter has indulged in this illegal business as police is turning a blind eye to them for reasons better known to them. There are a good number of desolate spots where these people show X-rated films overnight with their own generators. Ticket rate ranges from Tk 10 to Tk 20. Most of the viewers are high schools and college students. Elderly people alleged that their repeated appeals to the police fell in the deaf ears, as the VCR owners are influential enough to keep them at bay.

## Rivals' clash leaves 15 hurt

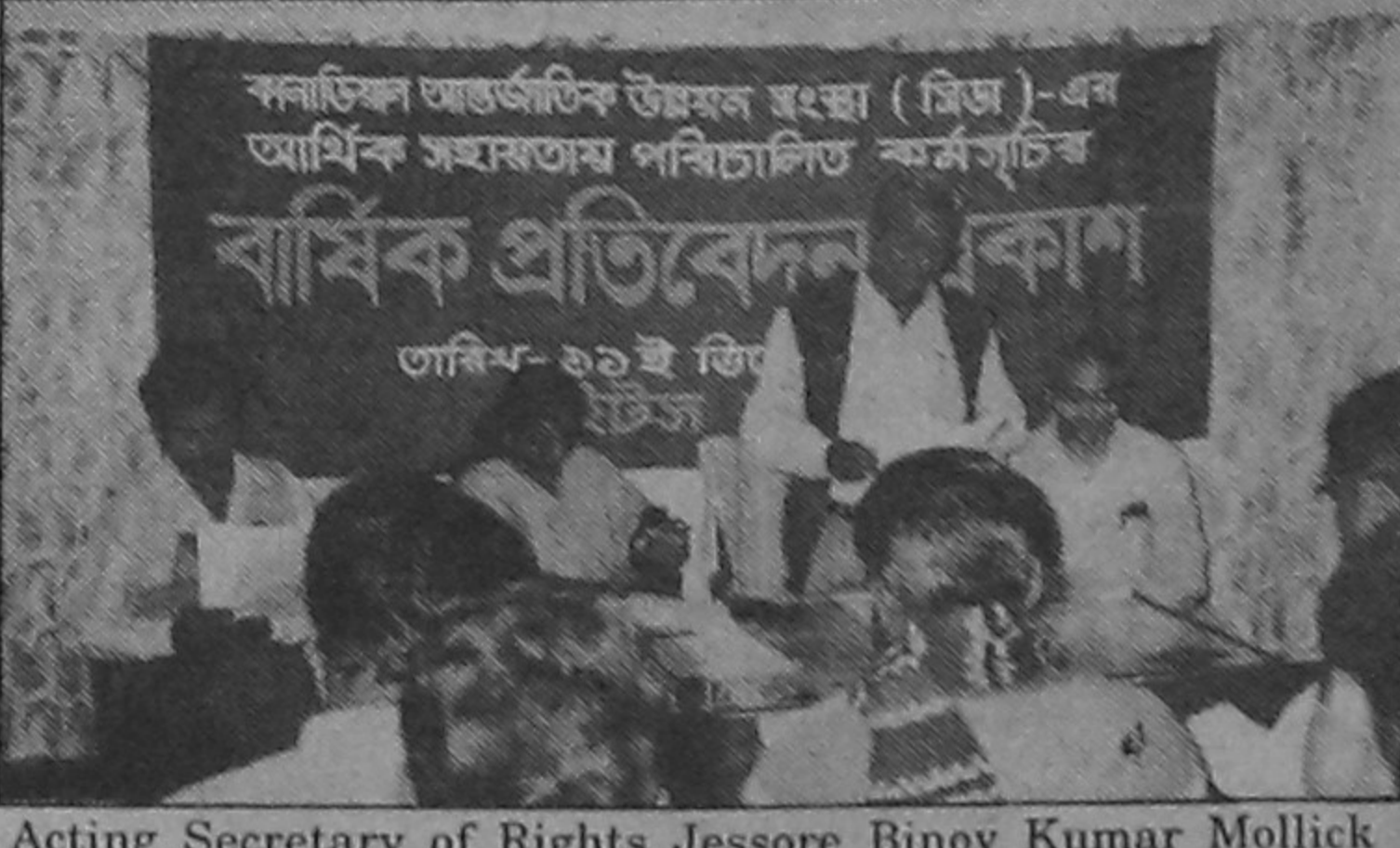
SIRAJGANJ, Jan 28: A fierce clash between two rival groups left 15 people injured at Nagati village in Belkuchi thana on Monday, reports UNB.

Seven of the injured were admitted to sadar and Belkuchi hospitals. Of the condition of Khorshed, 20, Kader, 25, and Altaz, 23, were stated critical. Witnesses said the clash ensued when one group tried to obstruct the earth filling work that began under the supervision of another group at a non-government primary school under Food for Work Programme. Both groups blasted crackers and threw brickbats during the one hour long battle. Separate cases were filed with the police.

## Development work begins

BAGERHAT, Jan 28: Works on 152 infrastructure development projects in nine thanas began this month, reports UNB.

Officials said the projects, to be implemented using 1,692 metric tons of wheat under Food-for-Work Programme will be completed by April next. Relief Ministry is providing the wheat for the projects, including construction and reconstruction of rural roads and earth filling on playgrounds of educational institutions. Another report says: Construction of the academic buildings of four non-government colleges is nearing completion. Facilities Department of Education Ministry is implementing the project at a cost of Tk 1.65 crore. The institutions are Begum Fazilatunnessa Mujib Mohila College in Fakirhat thana, Dwigrig College in Mongla thana, Shaheed Sheikh Abu Narayan College in Kachua thana and Sundarban Mohila College in Rampal thana.



Acting Secretary of Rights Jessore Binoy Kumar Mollick presenting the annual report of the organisation recently to the local journalists at a press conference in Jessore. — Star photo