

## National

**55 unnatural deaths last month in Jhenidah**

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Feb 13: At least 55 unnatural deaths were reported last month in the district.

Sources in police stations said eight were murdered, eight were killed in road mishaps and the rest 39 committed suicide in January.

Harunur Rashid Sheikh, 28, of village Dignagar in Shalakupana thana was chopped to death by some unidentified assailants on January 9.

On January 8 body of an unidentified young man was recovered from village Natima in Moreshpur thana.

A woman was raped and killed at village Ishwarba in Kaliganj thana on January 12.

The most gruesome murders took place in the evening of January 15 at Kanigate in Jhenidah town when a group of armed men gunned down Mir Ilas Hossain Dilip, central committee secretary of Sramajibi Mukti Andolan and Alfaazidin, district unit secretary of the party.

Abdur Rahman of village Gopinathpur in Kaliganj thana was killed in a filed at village Bateadanga in same thana on January 27.

According to police, a village doctor was beaten to death at village Mallikpur in Kaliganj thana. Villagers beat the doctor.

**Khas land distributed among landless farmers**

PATUAKHALI, Feb 13: State Minister for Textile A K M Jahangir said the present government is undertaking different programmes for the welfare of the landless people of the country, reports BSS.

"At present, the rural economy of the country stands on a strong foundation due to different pragmatic efforts undertaken by the government," he said while speaking at a function at Galachipa Thana Auditorium of the district.

The function was organised on the occasion of handing over documents of government's Khas land to 40 landless farmers of the thana.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of the district Anindra Chandra Karmaker and local Awami League leaders spoke on the occasion.

**Rabi farming scheme in Panchagarh**

PANCHAGARH, Feb 13: A total of 38,140 hectares of land have been brought under Rabi crops cultivation in five thanas of the district in the current season, reports BSS.

According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources, the crop-wise break up is boro paddy, 14,940 hectares, wheat 15,200 hectares, potato 2,850 hectares, mustard 800 hectares, onion 500 hectares and winter vegetables 3,850 hectares.

Officials expected production of more than 1.55 lakh tons of winter crops in the district if the programme could be implemented successfully.

A total of 250 demonstration plots have been set up to acquaint the farmers with the modern methods of cultivation.

BADC has taken necessary measures to distribute seeds, fertilisers, insecticides and other agricultural inputs among the farmers for the successful implementation of the programme.

Another report from Laximpur says: Over 49,500 hectares of land will be brought under Rabi crop cultivation this season with an estimated output target of 1,83,730 mts.

Officials said Agriculture office here is going to set a record by bringing 78 per cent of the district's 120,627 hectares crop lands under cultivation.

They said Boro paddy would be cultivated on 20,220 hectares of land, wheat on 1,500 hectares, potato on 300 hectares, sweet potato on 800 hectares, mustard on 3,000 hectares, groundnut on 5,500 hectares, maize on 300 hectares and various pulses on 4,300 hectares.

Besides, soyabean will be cultivated on 2,555 hectares.

**Shortage of teachers hampers pvt edn**

JESSORE, Feb 13: Lack of teachers and irregularities have brought the government's primary education programme in the district to its knees, reports BSS.

Official sources said posts of 156 teachers, including 62 headmasters, are lying vacant in 662 government primary schools in eight thanas of the district.

They said there are only 2,991 posts of teachers, including 661 of headmasters, for teaching about 190,970 students of the schools.

Even though the number of primary school students continues to rise following introduction of compulsory primary education and food-for-education programmes, no new post of teacher has been created.

Meanwhile, one month of the new academic year has elapsed but many students have not yet got their textbooks, the sources said.

BSS from Jhenidah adds: The distribution of textbooks, free of cost among the primary school students of the district, began recently.

In Jhenidah district, books will be distributed among

**Shoals make riverine journey risky**

From Aroop Talukdar

ASHRAF Hossain, 50, to death as he allegedly failed to cure a patient.

The last killing incident took place near Nurunnehar Mahila College area in Jhenidah town. Hasan, 23, a microbus driver was killed by some unidentified assailants.

Besides, 15 people committed suicide in Sadar thana, three in Moreshpur, one in Kotchandpur, seven in Kaliganj, five in Shalakupana and many other destinations in the last month.

**Fraticide**

HABIGANJ, Feb 13: A man was beaten to death allegedly by his younger brother in Azmiganj thana here Tuesday, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Anai Mia, 50, of Shibpasha village of the thana.

Police said Mokku Mia hit his elder brother Anai Mia with a bamboo stick over a quarrel with his brother's wife.

Anai was rushed to the local health complex where he succumbed to his injuries.

A case was filed with the police in this regard.

BARISAL, Feb 13: Plying of riverine vessels in this winter has become very risky due to emergence of numerous shoals along different river routes to and from Barisal, Dhaka, Patuakhali, Bhola, Jhalakati, Pirojpur, Barguna, Madaripur and many other destinations in the southern region.

Now nearly 100 passenger launches, both small and double-deckers including cargo vessels of different capacities are regularly plying along the region for years together.

It is to be mentioned, riverine routes are the main routes for thousands of people moving to and from different destinations in the districts.

Launch and cargo vessel owners and the *soren* (drivers) said to 'The Daily Star' that especially in the winter season especially in the winter season no river routes had no necessary depth of water for smooth plying of vessels.

At different points in the Meghna and the Padma near Chittagong, Dera point of the Areal Khan, the Kirtonkhola of Barisal, the rivers Ilisha and Tetulia of Bhola many shoal

lands have been emerged, but still remained under water. These shoals have been hampering smooth and regular plying of marine vessels, particularly at night time. Every year the routes are becoming gradually narrower as the river beds are not dredged out regularly.

In such cases journeys of passenger launches are being delayed. As a result the passengers are facing immense sufferings. Especially women and children on board have to suffer a lot due to shortage of food and drinking water.

According to a source of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) here, for smooth plying of big marine vessels it needs at least eight feet deep water along the river routes. The depth has become only five feet at Hizla, Badartara, Shoula, Patti, Haturia, near Laharhat and near Sreepur points along the river routes.

Meantime, a passenger steamer 'Ostrich' remained grounded in a paddy field after being stranded due to shortage of water near Hizla for one week recently.

A Barisal port official informed, it is the responsibility of the Hydrography Department of Water Development Board (WDB) to mark and find out the shoals hidden under water and the depth of water in the river routes. Its office is in Dhaka. As a result, it is becoming difficult to work for their alleged negligence, the official added.

He further informed, dredging is done time to time in the Kirtonkhola or other rivers, but it helps very little. Because when the dredging remains stopped then again siltation starts. Besides, the silts are left at other places along the river beds nearby creating further siltation there.

Barisal Port Authority supervises more than 50 stations in this area, but strange enough dredging, hydrography, marine survey and some other sectors go to different authorities.

The port authority faces various problems in different sectors almost always. Now, it is feared that some of the riverine routes might be abandoned or stopped forever if dredging is not conducted regularly, especially in the winter season.

**Reception to Chief Justice in Jessor**

JESSORE, Feb 13: Chief Justice Latifur Rahman on Thursday laid emphasis on accountability and neutrality of judges in a democratic system of government, reports BSS.

Speaking at a reception accorded to him in the auditorium of the district lawyers' association, the chief justice urged the jurists to uphold the norms of justice to retain the confidence of people in judiciary of the country.

The chief justice called upon lawyers of the country, especially the young lawyers, to be well aware of law for conducting cases and ensure fair justice.

Presided over by district lawyers' association president Faraz Shahadat Hossain, the meeting was also addressed by district and sessions judge Abdul Hal, special judge of special tribunal of women and child repression Mirza Serajul Islam, advocates Nurul Islam, Kazi Abdur Shahid Lal and Sheikh Hasan Islam.

**New kind of cattle disease**

MANIKGANJ, Feb 13: A new kind of cattle disease has been identified by veterinary surgeon of Manikganj Sadar Thana Cattle Hospital, reports BSS.

Dr Dulali Ranj Sarker informed the local journalists that she had detected the disease named warble fly infestation first in Bangladesh when she had been treating the cow of one Arshad Ali of village Kanta under Saturia thana of the district.

**Feni DIARY****Birth anniversary of Zia celebrated**

From Our Correspondent FENI, Feb 13: The 64th birth anniversary of former president and founder of BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) Ziaur Rahman was celebrated here in a befitting manner on January 19.

District BNP and its front organisations chalked out elaborate programmes on the occasion. The programmes include discussion and *intidal mahfil*. A discussion was held at local Zia Parishad office. Presided over by Mizanur Rahman, it was addressed among others by Kamrul Hassan Sardar, Ziauddin, Saheduddin Feroush and Seriful Islam.

**Office bearers of Bar Assoc**

Election of district Bar Association was held here recently.

Nurul Huda Chowdhury, Abdu Rob, Belayet Hossain and Borhanuddin Jahangir have been elected president, vice presidents and general secretary respectively. Other office bearers are: joint secretary- Giasuddin and treasurer- Shaful Alam. Senior advocate Akramuzzaman conducted the election. 157 voters out of 177 cast votes.

**Tk 3.71cr smuggled goods seized last year**

BDR personnel seized smuggled goods worth Tk 3.71 crore in the district last year.

According to BDR sources, during the period at least 200 operations were conducted in Modhugram, Champaknagar, Subapur, Chagolnai, Chandgazi, Box Mahamud, Belen, Muzumderhat, Subbarbazar, Fulgazi, Munsherhat, Mohammad Ali Bazar, Amtoli, Gitabari and Boriatali areas. The personnel seized the smuggled goods valued at Tk 3 crore 71 lakh 2 thousand and 800 hundred during the raids. 420 cases were also filed during the period.

**Man drinks spurious liquor, dies**

A man died after he drank poisonous liquor in Porshuram recently.

The dead was identified as Abdul Quddus, 55, of village Kolapara under Porshuram thana. He was night guard of Sadar TNO office. Family sources said Quddus fell sick after he took spurious liquor and was taken to Porshuram Health Complex where he died.

**Road development works progressing**

Development works of nine roads in the district at a cost of Tk 2 crore were being progressed satisfactorily.

According to official sources, Feni-Boshurhat road, Feni-Sanagazi road, Feni-Sonimuri road, Chelonia-Sonimuri road, Chhagolnai-Fazlalgat road, Chhagolnai-Muhuriganj road, Lamu-Lazarhat road, and Purshuram-Mirza Nagar road will be repaired and renovated under the project. About 30 per cent works have already been completed, sources added.

**Woman beaten to death**

A housewife was allegedly killed by her husband at village Mirjanagar under Porshuram recently.

The victim was identified as Monjura Begum, 25, wife of Aman Hossain. Neighbours said the husband beat the wife to death following an altercation over dowry. Police recovered the body and sent it to hospital for postmortem. A case was filed in this connection.

**News snaps****Govt official holding 7 posts**

THAKURGAON, Feb 13: Believe it or not, a government official has been holding seven posts concurrently, reports UNB.

Mostafa Kamal, TNO of Ranishankali thana, has been performing duties as Assistant Commissioner (Land) and Thana Election Officer of both Haripur and Ranishankali thanas. He has also been carrying out the responsibilities of Jailer in Ranishankali thana and TNO of Haripur thana. According to competent sources, Kamal has been entrusted with the responsibilities of seven offices, as the posts have long been lying vacant.

**View exchange meeting**

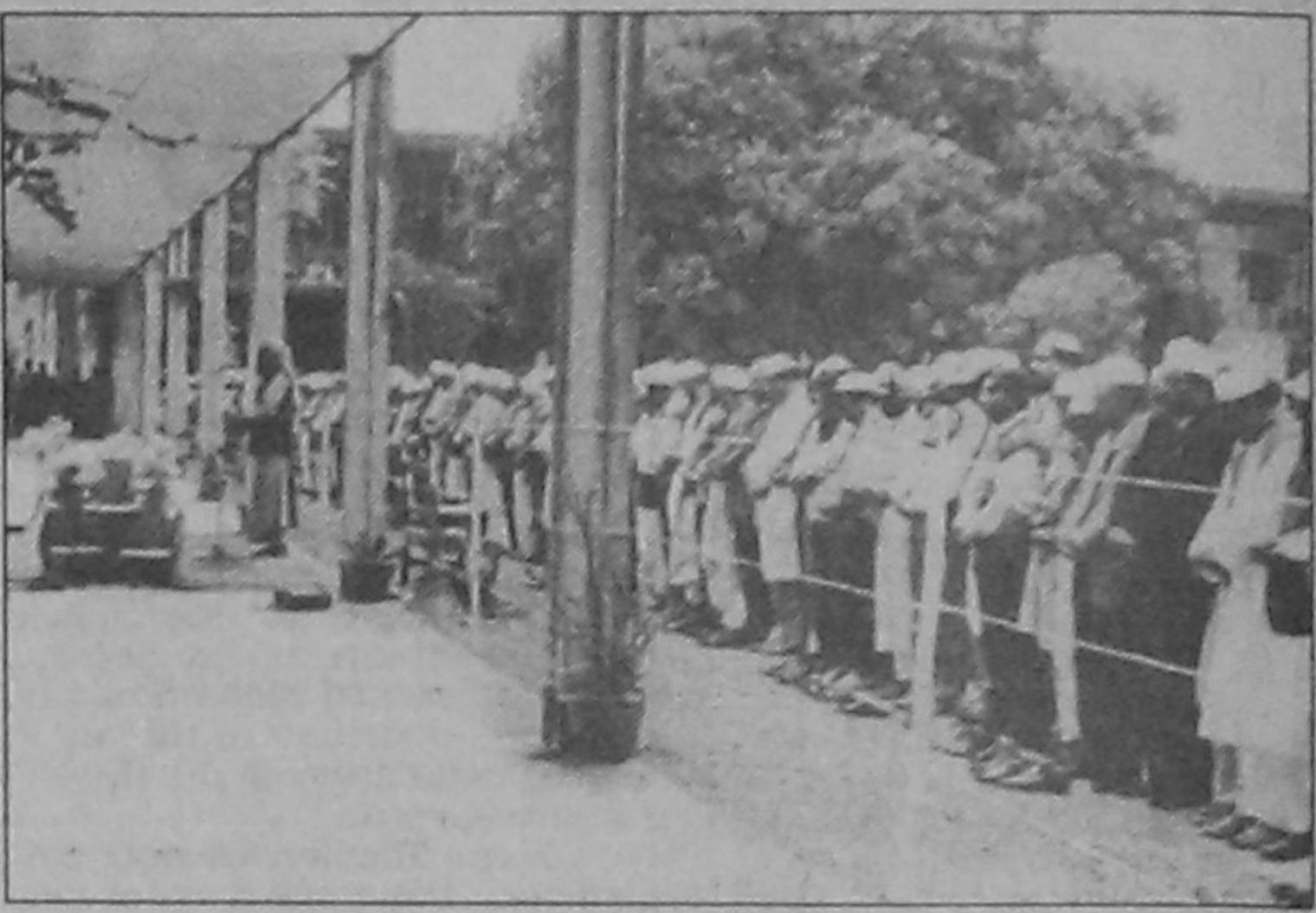
JHALAKATI, Feb 13: A view exchange meeting between the district administration and local elite, aiming to restore law and order in the town, was held on Saturday, reports UNB.

Police Super Mohammad Moniruzzaman presided over the meeting held at his conference room. District Awami League president Faraz Shahadat Hossain, the meeting was also addressed by district and sessions judge Abdul Hal, special judge of special tribunal of women and child repression Mirza Serajul Islam, advocates Nurul Islam, Kazi Abdur Shahid Lal and Sheikh Hasan Islam.

**Brilliant student killed**

BARGUNA, Feb 13: Armed bandits killed a brilliant student when he resisted them at Natun Bazaar in the town early Saturday, reports UNB.

Police said the robbers stormed into the house of Sundaribala Karmakar at about 3:30 am and stabbed Nuruzzaman Khan, 28, when he prevented them from committing robbery. He died on way to hospital. Nuruzzaman, who stood first class ninth in the masters' final year examination of Botany from Patuakhali Government University College last year, rushed to the neighbouring house hearing the screaming of Sundaribala. A case was filed.



Namaj-e-janaza of late vice chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University Mohammad Hossain was held on the university campus on February 5. Hossain was killed in a road accident on February 4. — Star photo

**Hemp cultivators convicted**

KURIGRAM, Feb 13: A court here on Thursday convicted four people, including a woman, and sentenced them to one-year rigorous imprisonment (RI) for cultivating hemp on the court's houses, reports UNB.

The convicts — Khabiruddin, Bashiruddin, Zobeda Khatun and Sayedul Haque of Sonaimuri village in Fulbari thana — were also fined Tk 1,000 each, in default, to suffer six months more RI. According to prosecution, police being informed by locals raided the village and seized nine hemp trees from the houses of the convicted people on December 31, 1997. Later a case was filed with Fulbari thana. After examining witnesses and records, the Assistant Sessions Judge handed down the verdicts in 2001 owing to an illegal移植 of hemp.

**Mustard output exceeds target**

KUSHTIA, Feb 13: Mustard production in 10 districts of Khulna division is likely to exceed the target due mainly to favourable weather and timely supply of necessary inputs to local farmers, reports UNB.

This year the supply of necessary seeds, fertilisers and pesticides by BADC and Agriculture Extension Department was satisfactory and this might lead to a bumper output. Some 1.5 lakh tons of mustard are expected to be produced on one lakh hectares of land in Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Jessor, Narail, Magura and Jhenidah districts this year.

**Poverty alleviation scheme**

GAZIPUR, Feb 13: State Minister for Rural Development and Cooperatives Advocate Mohammad Rahamat Ali on Saturday said the government undertook a pilot project here to turn rural households into farmhouses in line with the efforts for poverty alleviation, reports BSS.

"With the implementation of the project every house would be turned into self sufficient economic units eradicating poverty from the country," he said while speaking at a meeting of the project here. The state minister asked the officials and field workers to put in their all efforts for the success of the project as they joined the meeting at the deputy commissioner's office. Later he addressed a public rally here, also attended by Ahsanullah Master, MP and district Awami League president AKM Mozammel Huq.

**Phensidyl seized**

BENAPOLE, Feb 13: BDR jawans recovered 3,000 bottles of Indian phensidyl from a frontier bazar on Thursday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, the BDR jawans recovered the drug worth of Tk 2.5 lakh. None was arrested.

**Language Day in Mymensingh**

MYMENSINGH, Feb 13: A seven-day programme has been chalked out in a meeting, held at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner on Wednesday, to celebrate the International Mother Language Day here in a befitting manner, reports BSS.