

## National

## North Surma Bus Terminal

## 'Illegal' lease protested

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 30: The North Surma Bus Terminal Public Interest Protection Committee has announced a 9-day agitation programme to press for immediate cancellation of the 'illegal' lease of the bus terminal area to a private party. The announcement was given at a press conference held at the Sylhet Press Club on Saturday evening.

Leaders of the committee in a written statement placed in the press conference alleged that the Sylhet Municipality authority had leased out the terminal for 10 years to an individual illegally and without calling any tender. It had been given for only Taka 5 lakh where as through tender the amount would be at least Taka 25 lakh, they alleged. They also called upon the authority for taking immediate measures. Sujat Ali Rafique, Lecturer of Shah Khurram College read out the written statement in the

conference. The agitation programme includes, public meetings at places from today (August 27 to September 1), torch procession on September 3 and 6-hour hartal in the greater Taker Bazar area (concerned union) on September 4. If the demands are not met, further agitation programme would be announced on September 4, it was told in the press conference.

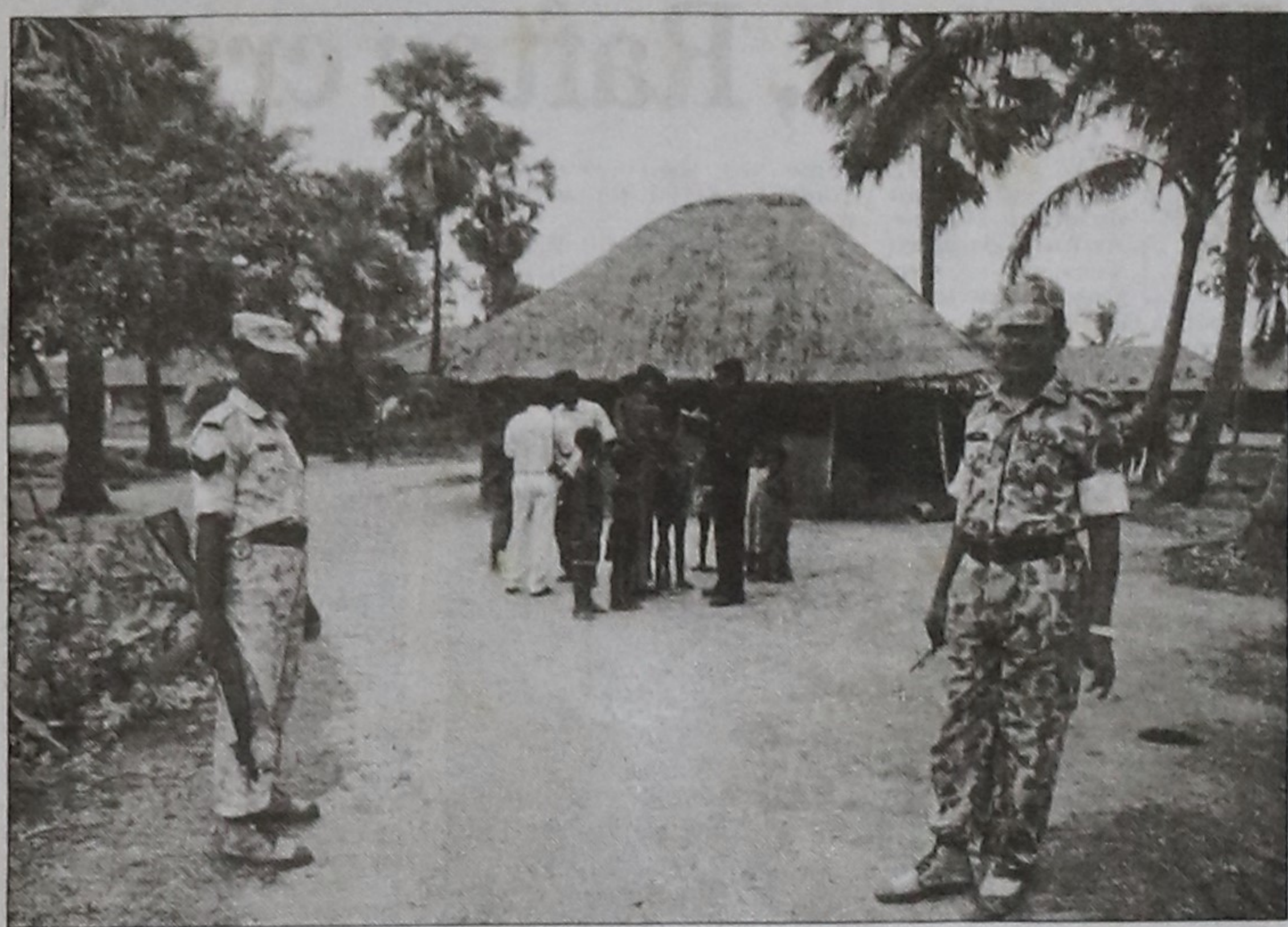
The committee earlier had handed over a memorandum to the Speaker in the Jatiya Sangsad, who is also the MP from the Sylhet Sadar Constituency.

On the other hand, the Sylhet Bibhag Ganadabi Parishad (Sylhet Division Public Demands Council) pressed a day-long hartal on August 27 in the South Surma area southern part of Sylhet town to press for immediate cancellation of the 'illegal' lease of Sylhet Central Bus Terminal located in the South Surma area.

It has been alleged that the municipality authority had given the lease without any tender or open announcement to the private parties. Besides, the valuable road side lands near the terminal had also been leased out and sold illegally by the municipality and Roads and Highways authority, the council alleged further.

Abdul Mukit Khan MP, extended his support for the movement against the illegal leasing out and selling of lands in the central bus terminal and roadside areas.

On the other hand, the municipality authority on Friday last instructed some lessee for stopping the construction of a building in the terminal area informing that, an enquiry had been going on by some government agency regarding the lease. The lessee started the construction works of a building for opening a restaurant, sources alleged.



A BORDER INDEED: The border between Bangladesh and India separates the houses of father and son at Haddoha of Bangladeshi side and Painter of the other. The BDR men are present to help the pressmen to see the split family at Bhonra border in Satkhira. — Star photo by A K M Mohsin

## Homes for homeless expected

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Aug 30: Rajshahi Development Authority (RDA) has undertaken a programme of rehabilitating floating people and slum-dwellers of the city.

Official sources said RDA has planned to build five storied buildings under the programme.

For the first phase, a project of building 11 five-storied buildings with 220 flats has been prepared and the project was recently sent to the Ministry of Works for approval. The project will cost Taka 7.96 crore.

Number of floating people and slum-dwellers in the city is increasing day by day. Hundreds of people are rushing to the city everyday to seek works. Most of them return back to their villages, but a good number of people do not go back home. They work here and there or seek work in the day and take shelter in the bus stands, railway stations, market premises, footpaths and anywhere else they get opportunity at night. Later, they manage to have a place in the already established slums or make new slums.

According to informations gathered by RDA through some non-government organisations (NGOs), there are 17 well-established slums in the city. Besides these, there are also some small slums or cluster of huts and makeshifts numbering one to 11, scattered here and there all over the city.

The 17 established big slums are - Bara Kuthi slum, Char Shrirampur slum, Maldah Colony slum, Shirol Colony slum, Assam Colony slum, Choto Bongram slum, Bihari Colony slum, Hajrapukur slum, Laxmipur slum, Dingadoba slum, Char Kazla slum, Binodpur slum, Bhadra slum, Veripara slum, Naodapara slum, Sopura slum, Nobanganga slum and Tikapara slum.

About 58,000 people of about 10,000 families live in these slums. Some other 5,000 people live in the scattered and small slums.

According to RDA information, about nine per cent of the total population of the city live in the slums. In addition to them, some other three per cent people, numbering about 21,000 in total, are floating people who do not have any kind of shelter.

These floating and slum people come mainly from Rangpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Sirajganj, Pabna, Natore, Naogaon, Bogra and Chapainawabganj. They usually pull rickshaws and carts, work in the crop-fields, hawk goods on

head, serve in the houses and do any other works they get to earn their livelihood. Some of them become beggars. Some also engage themselves in unfair jobs.

According to the statistics gathered by RDA, 13 per cent of these people pull rickshaws, vans and carts. The number of people working as motor transport workers is eight per cent, small traders 11 per cent, day labourers 12 per cent, hawkers six per cent, shop workers 20 per cent and the rest 30 per cent are engaged in different jobs.

RDA sources said, the buildings will be built in Bara Kuthi and Kazihata area. Each of the 11 buildings will have 20 flats of 400 square feet and 300 square feet area. There will be two rooms, a bathroom cum toilet, a kitchen and facilities of water supply in each flat.

When contacted, RDA chairman Abdus Salek said that the flats would be distributed among the slum-dwellers through tenders on hire-purchase system.

One has to pay Taka 1,000 to Taka 1,500 every month for 25 consecutive years to possess the allocated flat as their own.

"Though it is not certain at all, but we hope the project will be approved by early next financial year," said Abu Salek.



With the recession of water level erosion by the River Padma takes an alarming turn in Daulatpur upazila in Kushtia district. The river devoured some one thousand dwelling houses in the last 20 days in the upazila, rendering about 8,000 people homeless. — Star photo

## Satkhira DIARY

## Old man dies of snakebite

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Aug 30: An old man died of snakebite at village Kushtia in Kaliganj upazila recently.

Villagers said a snake bit Kazi Enamul Haq, 62, at night. The man, who died on the spot, was sleeping.

## Tiger kills man

An old man was killed by a tiger at Chaltebari canal in the Sundarbans last week.

The victim was identified as Montaz Ali Gazi, 60, of village Kodamtala in Shyamnagar upazila. Witnesses said the victim came under the attack of a tiger when he went to the forest to cut wood. Later villagers recovered the body.

## Man gets 5-yr jail term

A man was sentenced to five years' imprisonment recently for selling drugs.

The convict was identified as Ranjan Kumar Ghosh of village Jhrowdanga under Sadar upazila. The man was arrested with drug on January 13, 1997.

## Shaheed Day at Sriramshi today

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, Aug 30: August 31 is a black day. It is the Sriramshi Shaheed Day.

On this day in 1971, 40 valiant sons of the soil embraced martyrdom for the cause of the motherland's independence at Sriramshi, a remote village in Jagannathpur upazila under Sunamganj district. A contingent of Pakistan Army with the help of some collaborators of the area killed innocent people, destroyed many dwelling houses by setting fire on those and raped women. The people of the area still remember with awe those black events. They recall the contribution of our heroes and remember the day's incidents which are still everfresh in their memory.

A number of the villagers while talking to The Daily Star informed that it was about 9 am on August 31 about 40 people consisting members of the occupation Pakistan Army and Rajakars, accompanied by Ashraf Miah and Ahmed Ali of the same village reached there by two or three boats. They established their camp at the local high school building. They immediately announced that a peace committee would be formed. For this purpose, people of the area should gather at the high school soon premises, they announced further.

But the villagers could not be

convinced by such an announcement. Getting no response, the army men sent some of their collaborators to some houses of the village. They brought some people from different houses to the school building forcibly. The collaborators divided the villagers into two groups-one group was boarded on a boat which was moved to the bank of a canal at Rasulpur para. Hands and legs of these people were tied up. All these people were lined up on the bank of the canal and then the occupation Pakistani Army soldiers fired gunshots aiming at them. The other group was also fired the same way. Most of the people met their tragic end of lives. But, miraculously, only a few of them remained alive with serious injuries. Pakistani army men also caught and killed some other people who were passing through the canal from the boats. All the bodies were buried some how on the next day or later on.

With a view to keeping their sacrifice alive to the new generation the villagers later on formed an organisation styled 'Sriramshi Shaheed Smriti Sangsad'. They also built a memorial monument in the school premises. Every year, local people observe the day through different programmes.

## Kidnapped Santhal youth reappears?

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 30: The so-called kidnapped Santhal youth was found alive with his father in Tarash upazila on Sunday night where he confessed that he was not at all kidnapped.

It was published that the tribal youth, Debesh Mohonto, 28, son of Sabira Mohonto of village Boail under Tarash upazila was allegedly kidnapped on July 27 while on way towards home from Nimgachi hat in the Chalan Beel area. It was also published that following his kidnap he remained untraced and the kidnapper demanded an amount of Taka 5 lakh for his alive body. Panic gripped everywhere. Police tried to trace him out, but failed.

However, all on a sudden he appeared with his father at Tarash Police Station premises and made an statement that he was not at all kidnapped, but he denied to answer any question about his whereabouts during the last one month. He added that he is a poor man. So why the kidnapper will arrest and demand money from him? After his statement people of the locality expressed their mixed reaction.

## Law and order deteriorates in Netrakona

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, Aug 30: Law and order situation has deteriorated here during recent days with the rise of crimes like murder, rape, robbery and clash, causing concern among people.

On July 2 Idrish Ali of village Ghaghrapara under Purbadhala upazila was killed by a group of unidentified assailants. But no one was arrested in this connection.

Police recovered three bodies from Baral haor, a water body, in Madan upazila on Aug 12. The three, all fishermen, were murdered, police said. The dead were identified as Golam Kibria, 35, Mainul Haque, 38, and Titon, 33. Motive of the murder could not be known.

A robbery was committed at Baltali on Netrakona-Dhaka road on July 1. The robbers put barricades on the road, intercepted a motorcycle and a truck and looted valuables at gunpoint.

Another robbery was committed on July 13 at Gujakhalkanda Bazar on Mymensingh-Jaria Road under Purbadhala upazila. Robbers looted 60 thousands taka in cash from fish traders.

A dumb girl was raped by two youths at village Jamati under Sadar upazila on July 20.

## BCL GS defends PM's statement on judiciary

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Aug 30: General Secretary (GS) of the central committee of the ruling Awami League backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Ajaykar Khokon on Monday alleged that the opposition leader, Begum Khaleda Zia had parleys with the anti-liberation elements in America to protect the killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

He made the allegation at a students' gathering on the university campus which was organised by the university unit of BCL.

"Khaleda Zia went to America after the pronouncement of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case and

she pledged to the anti-liberation elements there to protect the killers of the Father of the Nation," he asserted.

He also stood by the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's comment on judiciary and demanded its accountability for the sake of the nation.

The BCL Secretary also urged the student activists to be involved with different development activities including setting up of a computer association, planting of saplings.

He suggested all the Muslim BCL activists to go to the mosques and pray regularly, what he said, to resist the Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) workers from hatching conspiracies from mosques.

## Khonika taking time to grow

From Muhammad Ali

JAMALPUR, Aug 30: Khonika, the lone picnic spot here is yet to be turned into a full-fledged tourist spot by providing all the modern facilities.

The picnic spot is surrounded by hills along with rich natural beauty which can easily draw the attention of people. Situated at the foot of "Garo Pahar" at Lauchapara in Bakshiganj upazila, the beautiful spot first came into lime light in 1996. Subsequently the local Zila Parishad turned it into a picnic spot at the cost of Taka 25 lakh on 50 decimals of land, donated by Sona Mia. Later on it was extended on 9 vast plot of land following acquiring of 31 hectares of land. Besides a beautiful garden, a series of Eucalyptus and Christmas trees also enhanced the beauty of the picnic spot.

Aborigines like Garo live here. Name of the hill Garo Hill was taken after the name of Garo. Other then Garo, Couch, Hajangs, Nanzai and Dhalu tribes also live here.

Kornajhora a hilly fountain is flowing with gentle murmur from the slope of Garo hill. Chirping of unknown birds and the beautiful scene green forest have made the environment really soothing. Some times herds of wild pigs and elephants



Khonika, the lone picnic spot in Jamalpur, needs development so that more tourists from home and abroad visit the place. — Star photo

enter into the area from the neighbouring India. But the picnic spot is comparatively safe for the visitors. The wild animals cannot cross the high hillocks of the spot.

The place is yet to be turned into a full fledged tourist spot by setting up rope way, holiday homes, hotels restaurants and electricity facilities. However, the spot, is only

one hour's way from Sherpur district town. In spite of meagre facilities a large number of visitors from far flung areas come here for picnic throughout the year.

## News snaps



The River Brahmaputra is about to devour the Shaheed Minar of Kamarjani High School in Gaibandha district. — Star photo by Rezaul Islam

## Project work progressing

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 30: Seven solid spars are being constructed in Sadar and Kazipur upazilas under a Tk 47 crore project, reports UNB.

Water Development Board (WDB) is implementing the project to protect Meghal Bazar and Shuvogacha in Kazipur and Simla in sadar upazilas from erosion by river Jamuna. Meanwhile, 95 per cent works on the project have been completed while the rest is expected to be finished by next month.

## Man succumbs to injuries

BOGRA, Aug 30: A man injured during a clash between two terror groups in the outskirts of the town succumbed at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Friday, reports UNB.

The victim Jahangir Alam, 30, son of Osman Goni, of Fulola area was injured during the clash ensued between the two rival groups of Shahin and Moju in Fulola area over previous enmity on August 18. Earlier, Shukur Ali, 60, father of Moju, was killed following the conflict between the two groups. Police earlier arrested the terrorists Moju, Shahin and Montu in connection with several criminal cases.

## ADP projects completed

MANIKGANJ, Aug 30: Manikganj Zila Parishad completed five development projects at a cost of Taka 23,28,204 under Annual Development Programme (ADP) recently, reports BSS.

Under the programmes carpeting of Singair Bazar-Singair College road in Singair, foot bridge on Satura-Hargaj-Fukurhati road in Satura, foot bridge near Bainya Prasad Mosque road in Ghior, a box culvert at M A Rouf College road in Haripurpur and main building of Bayra College in Singair Upazila have completed. Meanwhile, work on the main building of Bachamara College at Dulatpur and foot-bridge on Kitingchar-Nayading road in Singair is going on in full swing.

## Loan for youths

JHALAKATHI, Aug 30: Department of Youth Development has disbursed Tk 10.95 lakh loans among 101 trained but unemployed youths to take up self-employment schemes, reports UNB.

The department after imparting training to the youths from four upazilas gave certificates and loans. Food Minister Amir Hossain Amu distributed the certificates and the money on Saturday.

## Man killed in road mishap

MAGURA, Aug 30: A passenger was killed and 40 others were injured in a road accident at Shatkhali on Magura-Jessore road in Shaikh upazila on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The body of the victim was recovered from the spot and his identity could not be known immediately. Witnesses said the tragic incident took place as a Jessore bound bus from Dhaka collided with another bus coming from the opposite direction leaving at least 40 passengers of both the buses injured at noon. On information, police rushed to the scene and sent the injured people to different hospitals of Magura and Jessore. A case was filed with the police.



Abu Taher Sarker, founding convenor and patron of Greater Comilla Welfare Association, Khulna, donating an amount of Taka 8,100 to Pushpa Rani Shudradhar for her marriage. She lost her father along with other six members of the same family at a launch capsized in the river Meghna on May 1.

## Abducted trader rescued

RAJABARI, Aug 30: Police rescued a local rice trader from Khejur Tala village in Kushtia on Monday night after six days of his abduction, reports UNB.

Police also arrested four people identified as Murad Mia, Abu Daud, Anis Uddin and Abu Taher Ali in this connection. They all were believed to be the activists of the outlawed Siraj Bahini of Kushtia. Police said one Samad picked up rice trader Abdur Rahman on Aug 22 from here for realising ransom money of Tk one lakh. A case was filed with the police.

## Rivals' clash leaves woman dead

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 30: An old woman was killed and 10 other people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of villagers at Sundarpur village in Shibganj upazila on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Ayatan Bibi, 60. She was killed in bomb explosion. Police and witnesses said the clash ensued at about 8:30 am when the supporters of Ganu and Ansarul clashed each other over a trivial matter. Many bombs were exploded during the clash. The injured Momin, 23, Mannan, 20, Tariqul, 30, Unu, 60, Abu Bakkar, 30, Jalal, 23, Naser, 25, Rajadul, 25, Kalu, 25, and Babul were admitted to Nababganj Sadar Hospital.

## Project to develop roads

SATKHIRA, Aug 30: The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has taken up a project to develop 33 roads during the current financial year, reports BSS.

According to official sources, an amount of Taka 4.56 crore will be spent on this project in six upazilas. This project is part of Infrastructural Development Programme in the rural areas. The project included development of seven carpeted roads and two Harring Brick Bond (HBB) roads in Kaliganj Upazila, six carpeted roads and one HBB roads in Tala Upazila, eight carpeted roads in Kalaroa, three carpeted roads and two HBB roads in Sadar, two carpeted roads and one HBB roads in Debhata and one carpeted road in Syamnagar Upazila.

## Seminar

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 30: A seminar on woman and child health care and education was held at the conference room of the deputy commissioner, reports BSS.

It was jointly organised by the District Administration and the UNICEF. The seminar was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner of Chapainawabganj, Nurul Islam. It was attended over by public representatives, government officials, lawyers, physicians and journalists. UNICEF officials and NGOs representative were also present at the seminar.