

NEWS SNAPS

BNP leader succumbs to injuries

UNB, Pabna
A Union Parishad (UP) chairman and local BNP leader, who was shot at by terrorists a month ago, succumbed to his bullet injuries on Tuesday.
Abdul Hamid Jinnah, 52, chairman of Dashuria union and BNP joint convener of Ishwardi upazila, was shot on Nov 14 near his home at Dashuria traffic crossing. In a critical state he was admitted to a hospital in Dhaka where he died on December 11, family sources said.

Body of unidentified youth recovered

UNB, Chapainawabganj
Police recovered the body of an unidentified youth from a marsh at Upa Rajarampur Sarkarpara in the municipal area of Chapainawabganj early Wednesday.
Police said unknown miscreants dumped the body into the water body after strangling him. The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Int'l HR Day observed

UNB, Jhenidah
International Human Rights (HR) Day was observed in Jhenidah on Monday through various programmes.
On the day, Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR), Jhenidah branch, brought out a colourful procession in the morning. Later, a discussion meeting was held at the old Collectorate building premises. Among others, Adv Anwar Hossain, Adv M A Mutalib, teacher Monwara Khatun, Adv Shamsunnahar and Principal Aminur Rahman spoke at the meeting. The speakers stressed the need to make the people aware about their basic rights and to be vocal and united against violation of human rights.



Gopalganj unit of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) distributed prizes among some distressed Christian students of the district town recently.

Terrorists attack central leader of BNP

UNB, T Gaibandha
A gang of terrorists attacked and injured Saiful Alam Shaja, a central leader of BNP near Bara Mosque in Gaibandha town on Tuesday.
He was rushed to Dhaka in a critical condition for treatment. Shahana Begum, wife of Saiful filed a case against Rana Chowdhury of Gaibandha town and his accomplices, but police could not arrest him till date. Meanwhile, the angry supporters of the party brought out protest processions and launched attack and ransacked the residence of Rana time and again injuring at least 12 people. The speakers demanded arrest of the culprits in a meeting of four-party alliance on Wednesday. Tension was prevailing in the town.

Indian national with hemp arrested

UNB, Kurigram
Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) arrested an Indian national with 21 kgs of hemp while entering into the country through the Roumani border on Tuesday night.
BDR arrested Jamiruddin, son of Zillur Rahman of Andabhangra village in Assam from 1051 no pillar at Italu Kanda. In another drive BDR seized four and a half kg hemp from Uttar Atantapur village in Phulbari upazila on Wednesday. Two separate cases were filed with the police.

Terrorists active again in Shalikh UZ of Magura

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

The terrorists of outlawed 'Mitul Bahini' have started doing their misdeeds again in different villages of Shalikh upazila (UP) after a pause for about two years, local people alleged.

From November 14 to 26, the terrorists of 'Mitul Bahini' committed a series of crimes like abduction for ransom, toll collection, snatching at broad day light and forcible harvesting of paddy of other persons.

On night of November 14, the activists of outlawed 'Mitul Bahini' abducted Hasan, 17, son of Salek Mola at village Katakhal in Sadar upazila. On payment of Tk 2 lakh, Hasan was released on the following day, local people said.

On November 24, terrorists of this notorious force snatched Tk 66 thousand at gun-point from Anup Kumar, a businessman at Bamonhati village of Shalikh upazila. The terrorists abducted him and took him to Katoli village of Shatkhali union and snatched the money while he was returning home from the local bazaar.

Besides, the Mitul Bahinimen, at gun point, harvested paddy on five acres of land of Emdad Shikder, Lutfur Shikdar and Meser Minar at Darikhator village and Siddique Mian of Shuitala in Gangarampur of Shalikh upazila. The terrorists also beat up eight people severely including Masud, son of Meser Minar of Darikhator village as they tried to prevent the terrorists taking away paddy. Piar Ali, Amor and Ayub Ali of village Shuitola under the banner of 'Mitul Bahini' committed the crimes.

Earlier, in the month of October, just after the parliamentary election, the terrorists of the same notorious 'Mitul Bahini' committed a series of armed robberies and toll collection.

On October 13, police went to Ramandakathi village in Shalikh to arrest Mitul. But after a gunfight with police, Mitul managed to escape.

But an innocent villager was killed during the cross fire between police and 'Mitul Bahini'.

When contacted, the local police admitted that the 'Mitul Bahini' men are engaged in committing different type of crimes. But as their movement is concentrated along the frontier villages of Magura and Jessore, they are yet to be nabbed.

Mitul, 35, of village Ramanada kathi in Shalikh upazila started his terrorist activities in 1993, forming a group under the patronisation of a union parishad (UP) chairman.

In 1999, police in Magura led by the then SP M Akbar Ali started special crackdown in Magura. During the period four infamous terrorists of Shalikh upazila Nasir, Asalat, Zakir and Shaheen were killed in encounters with police.

Some close aides of Mitul were also arrested in special drives which perplexed the gang leader and forced him to flee the area.

Mitul finally surrendered to police in June, 1999 in response to a general amnesty declared by the government. After several months he came out of jail managed a bail.

But he and his notorious force remained silent for about two years. But Mitul has become active again just after formation of the new BNP led four-party government.

Local peace-loving people have demanded immediate arrest of Mitul and his men.

Massive winter crops farming scheme in 10 S-W dists

UNB, Jessore

A massive programme has been taken up to cultivate winter crops in 10 districts of southwestern region including Jessore in the current season.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension, 4.19 lakh hectares of land will be brought under Boro farming programme with a production target of 14.12 lakh tons.

Of the total, 4.08 lakh hectares will be brought under high yielding Ufshi variety while the rest under local variety.

Of the total land, wheat will be cultivated on 87,900 hectares to produce 2.03 lakh tons, potato on 18,200 hectares to produce 2.07 lakh tons, maize on 5,300 hectares to produce 23,161 tons, sweet potato on 2,100 hectares to produce 21,000 tons, mustard on 60,000 hectares to produce 60,000 tons.



An execution site of the occupation Pakistan forces and their collaborators in Gopalganj where the brutes killed many known and unknown freedom loving people during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971.

Medicines being sold in black markets

UNB, Rangamati

Poor patients are being deprived of essential medicines at free of cost at the government and non-government (NGO) hospitals as those are sold in black markets.

Officials in-charge of stores sell these drugs to local pharmacies instead of supplying to the poor patients.

Some other drugs are also supplied to hospitals for selling at subsidised rate so that the insol-

vent patients could purchase those at minimum price. This type of drug includes pain-relieve items like pathidine.

Generally an ampoule of pathidine sells in the local market at Tk 150 to Tk 200 whereas the government supplies it to local hospitals for supporting poor patients at only Tk 12.

But, in most of the cases, this drug goes to the black market creating artificial crisis.

Sirajganj was freed on December 14,'71

AKHTARUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj

People of Sirajganj on Friday observed Sirajganj Liberation Day. Sirajganj was totally freed from the occupation Pakistan Army on December 14 in 1971.

A discussion was also held at the Muktiyodha Sangsad office on the occasion. Local unit of Muktiyodha Sangsad (a council of freedom fighters) brought out a procession in the town to observe the day. Deputy Commissioner Ibadat Ali, who is also the chief patron of the organisation, led the procession which paraded the main thoroughfares of the town. District unit commander (convener) of Muktiyodha Sangsad Gazi Mohammad Ala Uddin, former commander Gazi Lutfar Rahman Arun, district BNP convener TMA Mannan MP, Sirajganj town BNP president Azizur Rahman Dulal, Advocate Mokaddes Ali, Nurul Islam Nuru, Mirza Mostofa Zaman, Gazi Abu Yusuf Surja journalist Akhtaruzzaman Bablu, among others, took part in the procession.

People from all walks of life in Sirajganj forged strong unity during the War of Liberation. The Pakistan occupation forces launched a crackdown on innocent people in Sirajganj on April 25.

However, the occupation soldiers faced resistance on the first day at Sirajganj town, the then sub-divisional headquarters. Members of Sechhasebak Bahani, a voluntary organization, tried to resist the marauding army. They halted a train carrying Pakistani soldiers in Gatina railway bridge area. However, the soldiers succeeded in entering the town.

They killed hundreds of innocent people including women and children and destroyed a good number of dwelling houses and business establishments. Members of Bihari community and Muslim League supporters joined Pakistani forces. They also killed many prominent figures in the town. The Pakistan army captured all the nine thana headquarters by April 26, 1971. The Pakistani forces set up their camps at government buildings in the town.

Following the crackdown, people fled from the town. Most of them took shelter in villages and the neighbouring India. Thousands of young men left the country for India to take military training. Many stayed in the country and organised the people to fight against Pakistani forces.

Lutfar Rahman Arun was assigned to train the local youths. On June 14, the training camps at Bhadrachal in Kamarkhanda thana came under Pakistani attack. But Pakistani soldiers equipped with modern weapons built a strong resistance. After that the freedom fighters had to leave the area.

During the period between June and July the freedom fighters started advancing. Freedom fighters led by Amir Hossain Bhulu, Abdul Latif Mirza, Shorab Ali Sarker, Lutfar Rahman Makhan, Ishak Ali, Alamgir

near the Government College area as they found the resistance of the Pakistan Army had already been withdrawn. The Pakistan Armymen left the area and retreated to the main camp in Sylhet town on the previous night. The advance party of freedom fighters, without any resistance, entered into the main town and made a round even from near the main camp of the Pakistan Army which was in Salutikor area.

In the meantime, a contingent of 'Z Force' under the leadership of Ziaur Rahman, from Kanaighat, reached the Alurtal area near the Government Veterinary Firm. The Pakistani forces became trapped from all directions while negative messages from other parts of the country reached them, totally damaging their courage by that time. But the Pakistan Army, out of grudge, hit the Keane Bridge in Sylhet town and caused its partial damage. On December 13 when the group was returning to the main camp, it did the destructive job blasting a dynamite. The huge sound had shaken the entire town.

The night following December 14 was a little different. Small groups of freedom fighters and allied forces entered into the town area through different entry points with a heroic mood. Common men, in thousands, came out of the streets with a sigh of great relief. Every body embraced the heroes. The whole town was humming with small processions with people chanting 'Joy Bangla' slogans. The town was freed from the clutch of Pakistan Army on the next morning. However, the official surrender of the Pakistani forces took place after another day.

Sylhet Liberation Day

IQBAL SIDIQUEE, Sylhet

Today (Saturday) is the historic 15th December. Sylhet, the then district headquarters of the north-eastern region of the country, was liberated from the clutches of Pakistan Army on this very day in 1971.

The holy town on Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) was humming with sky touching slogan- 'Joy Bangla' - by the victorious members of freedom fighters. People of this region got the taste of liberation, one day ahead of independence of the entire nation.

In 1971, the Indian authority strengthened its air strike on Sylhet region after December 6, when India officially announced recognition to Bangladesh. By this time, the freedom fighters geared up their guerilla attacks from all corners. Both the freedom fighters and Indian allied forces scored victory one after another while the Pakistan Army started losing their strongholds at places. The Pakistan Army also strengthened its counter air strikes at different places. In the afternoon on the same day, ignoring all these moves, a group of freedom fighters and allied forces reached Khadimnagar, a suburban area of the town on its eastern side. Almost at the same time, two other groups of freedom fighters took position at Jalalpur and Lamakazi. Such a position of the freedom fighters at strategic places surrounding the town areas, in fact, put the occupation Pakistan Army in a critical situation. This time, only the northern side was open, which was totally inaccessible for the Pakistan army. This is because there were hilly areas and Indian borders. They had

no way to retreat. Thus the Pakistani Army en became almost trapped in Sylhet.

Two freedom fighters named Anwar Hossain Gora and Kuti Miah fixed a loud speaker on an open jeep and started proceeding towards the main town from the Khadimnagar area in the afternoon of December 13. He called upon the Pakistan army to surrender their force. With another jeep, Dewan Farid Gazi, the then MP and the civilian advisor of the region along with Colonel Bagchi of the Indian Army also moved towards the town. As the Pakistan Armymen ignored their call and put a resistance near the Sylhet Government College area, all became disappointed and backed out on that day.

On the same day, there was an important meeting in the Darbast area on Sylhet-Tamabil road. The main plan was to free Sylhet town without any bloodshed. In that meeting, Dewan Farid Gazi, Colonel Bagchi of the Indian Army and Colonel CR Dutta of Bangladesh reached a consensus that the Pakistan Army should be pressurised for surrender without bloodshed. On the eve of the final victory none of them wanted any loss or damage to the Haripur Oil and Gas field, Transmission building of Radio, and the Sylhet Government College, all located in the nearby areas.

The valiant fighters and members of the Indian Army under the leadership of Dewan Farid Gazi, Colonel CR Dutta and Colonel Bagchi started proceeding towards Sylhet town again. The luck was good enough when they reached

Hossain, Abdul Aziz Sarker, Abdul Aziz Mirza, Motahar Hossain Talukder and Ismail Hossain Talukder launched guerilla attacks on the occupation forces and their local collaborators.

A fierce battles took place in Tarash, Bhadrachal Baritoli, Sailsa Bari and Ullapara thana areas. In the battle for Tarash on November 11, at least 100 Pakistani soldiers were killed and 11 including a captain detained.

Freedom fighter Gazi Lutfar Rahman Arun, Abdul Latif Mirza, Lutfar Rahman Makhan, Alamgir Hossain, Abdul Aziz Sarker, Bimal

Kumar Das and Abdul Aziz Mirza played a vital role in the battle. Battle for Sailsa Bari was another important battle. The advancing freedom fighters faced a resistance from the Pakistani occupation forces in Sadar thana. Freedom fighter Sultan Aziz, Samad, Safor Abul Khaleen embraced martyrdom. Aminul Islam Chowdhury was seriously injured.

The allied forces entered Sirajganj town on December 13 midnight and conquered the then December 14. At last, the district was totally freed from the Pakistani occupation forces.