

NEWS SNAPS

Miscreants torch puja mondap

UNB, Chandpur  
Unidentified miscreants torched a Puja mondap at Lekerpara area of the town Friday. Witnesses said the hoodlums entered into the house of Majumdar of the area at dead of night and set fire on the Puja mondap. Previous rivalry over a piece of land near the mondap was believed to be the reason behind the arson. A case was filed with local police.

Attack on BNP leader's house: 4 held

UNB, Sylhet  
Police arrested four people in connection with the bomb attack on the house a BNP leader. The arrested are identified as Mujibur Rahman Shahin, Rubel Ahmed Sumon, Rubel Khan and Rahel Ahmed. Police said a group of terrorists hurled cocktails on the house of District BNP General Secretary Ariful Haq in the early morning on December 15 damaging the windowpanes. Another source said the attack was made by JCD leaders and workers who were ousted from the organisation recently.

60 pc work on two bridges completed

UNB, Barisal  
About 60 per cent work on the Sikarpur and Doanika Bridges on the Faridpur-Barisal highway has been completed. The 291-metre Sikarpur Bridge and 388-metre Doanika Bridge are being constructed involving Tk 112.76 crore, including Tk 92 crore assistance from the government of Kuwait. Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda Friday visited the bridges. During the visit concerned officials informed that work on the bridges is expected to be completed by next 10 months. When completed, communication between Dhaka, Khulna and southwestern and eastern parts of the country will be eased.

Telephone subscribers face difficulty

UNB, Narail  
Telephone subscribers have been facing much difficulty due to lack of proper functioning of the district telephone exchange for several days. Concerned sources said the subscribers have been facing difficulties in getting their desired numbers and talking to the other ends due to cross connection. Official sources said trouble has been created in the underground cables due to unplanned construction of bridges and culverts in the town by the municipality. They said 20 per cent telephones went out of order and 30 per cent face cross connection problem due to the reason.

Broadcasting time increased

UNB, Rangamati  
The broadcasting time of Bangladesh Betar Rangamati station will be increased by two hours soon. The centre would air programmes with new vision with the participation of the local artists, particularly the tribal ones. Process of appointing new announcers, singers, musicians have already been completed, they added. Three posts have also been created in the News division aiming at broadcasting news from the centre, said an official. At present, Rangamati centre airs one-and-a-half hour local programme from 4:30 pm. It also transmits programmes of Chittagong and Dhaka station during 2-4 pm period.

Farmers lose interest in potato farming

UNB, Narail  
Farmers are losing interest in potato cultivation due to low price and lack of adequate preservation facilities in the southwestern districts. Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) has set a target to produce 21 lakh metric tons of potato from 14,203 hectares of land in 10 districts of the region in the coming winter. But there are only 13 cold storage in the region with the capacity of 13,000 metric tons. Sources said the region needs at least 10 such cold storages to preserve potato. Due to lack of preservation facilities a huge quantity of potato perishes every year in the southwestern districts. Moreover, due to the abundant supply of potato its market price comes down abnormally in the peak season causing financial losses to the growers.

Trains now safe transport to smuggle timber

UNB, Sylhet  
Trains have become a safe transport to smuggle timber worth lakhs of taka into different parts of the country from Sylhet.

Reliable sources said an organised gang with the help of a section of officials and employees of Forest Department, GRP and railway employees, has been engaged in smuggling Segun, Gamal and Koroi timber from the reserved forests of the region.

They said the timbers are carried to Sylhet Rail Station by the wagons of Jalalabad Express and Surma Mail Train without booking from Satgaon, Sreemongal, Bhanugach, Kulaura, Borolekha and Boromchal stations.

The timbers are then dispatched to different parts of the country. A group of gangsters and extortionists are also involved in the process of smuggling.

Railway police take Tk 30 to 60 per piece of timber according to their sizes. On average, some 1,000 pieces of timbers are unloaded at Sylhet Railway Station daily.

BDR members seized huge quantity of smuggled timbers from Sylhet Railway Station during October and November.

When asked, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Government Railway Police (GRP) denied the allegation of timber smuggling through the station.

Principal held for misappropriating college fund

UNB, Bogra  
Police arrested the principal of Karimpara Taslimuddin Tarafder College in Gabtali upazila of Bogra on Wednesday on charge of misappropriation of college fund.

Principal Abul Kalam Azad, also an accused in other corruption cases, was arrested along with his accomplice Mahfuzur Rahman, a schoolteacher, police said. Earlier on Tuesday and Wednesday, police in separate drives arrested two alleged terrorists along with a pistol and one revolver. The arrested were identified as Juba Dal leader Mamunur Rashid of Brindabanpara in Bogra town and Napoleon, 20, of Naruli area. Police arrested Napoleon along with a revolver from Circuit House road while trying to abduct Shah Alam, 28, Wednesday morning.

Stories of heroism disappearing, say Natore villagers

People remember liberation war heroes with gratitude on Dec 21

ANWAR ALI, Natore

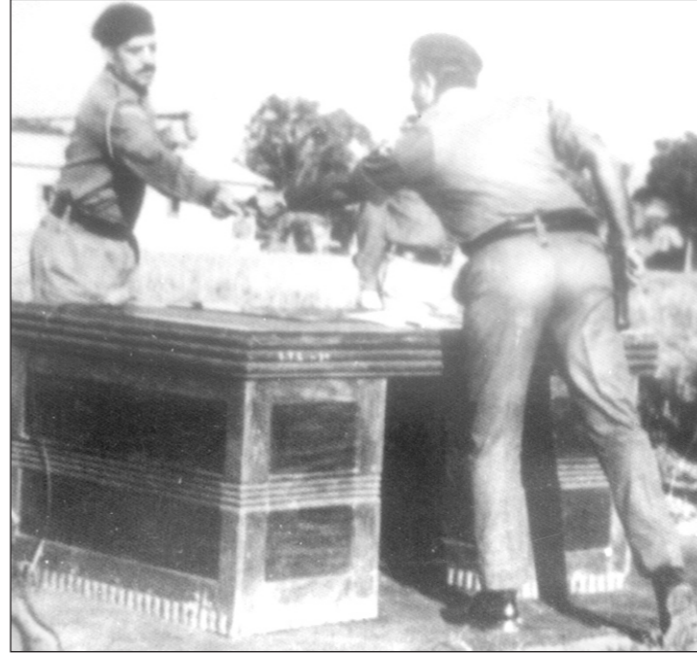
Natore is a place where incidents of brutality of the occupation Pakistani forces and heroism of the freedom fighters have remained only within the local people.

This correspondent visited Doadpara, Gopalpur, Chhatni, Madhnagar, Kholabaria and Augdigha areas of Natore where elderly people said that due to indifference and negligence, these stories of heroism are disappearing from history. But every year in this month of Bijoy (victory), people of the areas remember them with gratitude and reverence.

Bangladesh was freed on December 16, 1971, while Natore, the then sub-division in greater Rajshahi was liberated on December 21 following the massacres of Doadpara, Gopalpur and Chhatni villages.

Massacre of Doadpara

Pakistan occupation forces attacked Bonpara area in Boraigram on April 20, '71. They killed five persons at Haroa village on that day. Then many of the non-Muslim Bengalis of Bonpara took shelter at Christian missionaries hospital in fear of the Pakistan forces. May 3, 1971 was the fateful day when the Hanadars (raiders) came to know that some mukti bahini (freedom fighters) took shelter at the hospital. In the afternoon, the Hanadars besieged the hospital and arrested many Bengalis. Earlier, they also picked up many other liberation workers from neighboring villages. They dragged all the young and old Bengalis on their trucks and took them under Doadpara bridge, 10 kilometers off Bonpara to the west beating them up mercilessly. Then the occupation Pakistan army gunned down at least 85 persons down, recall the old people of Doadpara. Before leaving the village, the Pakistan army told the villagers to make arrangements for burial of the dead bodies, piled up under the bridge. Different sources say that it was Razakar Hafez Abdur Rahman who was behind the massacre of Doadpara.



COURTESY: RU ARCHIVE

Unconditional surrender of the occupation Pakistan Army at Dighapatia camp in Natore on November 21 in 1971.

Massacre of Gopalpur

Lieutenant Md Anwarul Azim, Manager of North Bengal Sugar Mills, Gopalpur, was one of our martyred intellectuals. He contributed significantly to the freedom fighters, cause in Gopalpur. He closed the mill after Bangabandhu's call for non-cooperation with Pakistan government on March 7. Once in mid April, Pakistani Major Sherwani told him to run the mill and threatened him of killing the area dwellers. So, Azim resumed works at the mill when Major Sherwani swore by the holy Quran not to harm anybody in the area. But the Pakistani Major broke his promise within a few weeks. The Pak army killed Azim along with 200 officials, workers and residents of the area on May 5. On that fateful day, when some members of Pakistan army and Razakers (collaborators of Pakistan Army) entered the mill, Azim went forward on behalf of his workers. The army men deceived the mill workers by telling them that they

wanted to organise a meeting at the guest house. The officials and workers of the mill were told to stand in line by a pond of the mill. Realising their intention, Azim intervened and volunteered to sacrifice his life in order to save others. But in the end they were all gunned down by the heinous forces making the water of the pond blood red. Today, the pond is known as Shaheed Sagar (Martyrs' Sea) and Gopalpur Railway Station is known as Azim Nagar.

Massacre of Chhatni

It was one of the most horrifying mass killings launched by the Pakistani forces on 19th Jaistha in the Bengali year of 1378. They were assisted by a big group of razakers and albadars (collaborators) led by Hafez Abdur Rahman. Chhatni massacre took place as a sequel to Pakistan forces crushing defeat at Nanguin battle, launched by our freedom fighters. Chhatni village was a favourite place for our freedom fighters as the villagers usually helped them much as possible. But

the villagers had to pay for their patriotism. On that fateful night, Pakistan army made a surprise attack on the village. They forced the villagers, who were asleep then, to come out of their houses. Then they took about five hundred villagers including women and children near Chhatni sluice gate and gunned them down at around dawn, so say people of the village.

Later, the neighbouring villagers buried the dead bodies of their relatives. Today, there are a number of mass graves in and around the village. However, Hafez Abdur Rahman managed to flee to Pakistan after the liberation of Bangladesh.

Four brave sons of Natore

The four brave freedom fighters of Natore Selim, Reja, Ranju and Babul were brutally murdered by the Pakistan forces and razakars following torture. Freedom fighter Selim was killed by Pakistan army in a face-to-face battle at Patnitala of Naogaon district on December 1, '71. Abdur Rahman Khan Chowdhury alias Selim went to India for training on guerrilla war. On that fateful day, after receiving the training on his way to Natore via Naogaon border, he was taking his meal at Patnitala camp. Then he heard of the presence of enemy forces near the camp. Selim volunteered to defend the enemy with a very small force to back him against trucks loaded with Pakistani soldiers. He alone advanced with his light machine gun and killed about 30 Pakistan troops. Later the enemy forces captured Selim and shot him to death. The cruel Pakistan troops tied the body of Selim behind a truck and drove round Naogaon town. After that day, his body was never found.

Pakistani forces surrendered on December 21, 1971 at Dighapatia camp. Several thousand Pakistani forces from the northern region led by Major General Hussain Shah surrendered. On this day, every year people of Natore celebrate the victory day and remember the valiant freedom fighters.

Revised schedule of Islamic University admission test

IU CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

The written test for admission into the first year honours course under the academic session 2001-2002 of Islamic University (IU) will be held from December 29, 2001 to January 7 next year.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting with the new IU VC Prof Mustafijur Rahman in the chair. All arrangements for admission tests have been completed, according to the admission committee.

Meanwhile, the admission test schedules have been changed twice.

A total of 42,788 candidates will sit for the tests. There are 1,090 seats in 18 department under five faculties. Thirty-nine students will vie for each seat. The highest competition will be in Computer Science and

Technology Department where 95 students will vie for each seat.

The Business Administration Faculty received 5,800 applications against 140 seats. The Applied Science and Technology Faculty received 12,494 applications against 210 seats while the Humanity and Social Science Faculty received 17,603 applications against 460 seats, the Law Faculty received 4,381 applications against 70 seats and Theology Faculty received 2,510 applications against 210 seats.

The admission test schedules are as follows: December 29: Al-Quran and Islamic Studies at 10 am and Al-Hadith and Islamic Studies at 1.30 pm December 30: Dawah and Islamic History and Culture at 1.30 pm December 31: BBA Accounting at 10 am and BBA Management at 1.30

New Vice Chancellor of Islamic University

RAHAT AHMED, Islamic University (Kusthia)

Professor Mustafijur Rahman of Dhaka University (DU) took over the charge of the Vice Chancellor (VC) of Islamic University (IU) on December 12.

Islamic University Chancellor Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia appointed him as the IU VC for a four-year term. Prof Mustafijur joined as the seventh VC of Islamic University.

However, the post of VC was lying vacant since November 3. Immediate past IU VC Prof Lutfor Rahman resigned on November 3 in face of pressure of pro-BNP and Jamaat teachers. Prof Lutfor was appointed the VC of Islamic University on October 19 in 2000 for a four-year term.

Prior to his joining as IU VC he was the Professor of the Arabic Department in Dhaka University.

It is alleged that the newly appointed VC did not place wreaths at Shahid Minar and at Muktabangla (a monument of the martyrs of our liberation war) although an arrangement was made by the authorities.

It is worth mentioning that just after the liberation of Bangladesh Prof Mustafijur was given forced retirement from Dhaka University for his alleged collaboration with the occupation Pakistani forces during our liberation war in 1971. The progressive forces of IU have been disappointed because of his appointment as VC.

Teachers of BNP backed Zia Parisad, Jamaat backed Green Forum, IU Officers' Association and activists of Jayatatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) attended the joining ceremony of the new VC. But no teachers of Shapla Forum and also of Bangabandhu Parisad attended the ceremony because of his involvement with the anti-liberation forces of our country.

The dissident section of Zia Parisad led by Prof Ashraf Ali was also totally inactive during the joining ceremony of the new IU VC.

It is to be mentioned here that none of the vice chancellors of IU could complete so far their term due to immense pressure by the political parties.



The vice chancellor of Rajshahi University (RU) places wreaths at the monument of a mass grave on the campus on the occasion of Victory Day on December 16. The pro-vice chancellor and the registrar of the university are also seen.

BCL worker seriously injured

UNB, Munshiganj

A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) worker was seriously injured when terrorists allegedly belong to BNP cut down his both wrists and fired shot on his leg on Thursday.

Police said the BNP workers led by local terrorist Afzal abducted Abu Siddiqui at noon and cut down his both wrists and fired shot on his leg. Police raided the house of Afzal at Diti Hogolkandi village in Sadar upazila at night and recovered two firearms, four Chinese axes and one knife.

However, none was arrested during the raid. On the same night, police raided a number of houses of the village to arrest the persons involved in the incident.

Seven timber smugglers arrested

UNB, Barguna

Forest officials arrested seven timber smugglers along with 500 CFT timber Thursday night.

The forest officials said they intercepted an engine-driven trawler in the river Binshkhali and seized the Sundari timber. However, three of the smugglers managed to flee from the custody.