

NEWS SNAPS

Armed assailants stab Juba Dal leader

**UNB, Narsingdi**  
Armed assailants stabbed a Juba Dal leader to death in Shibpur upazila of Narsingdi early Monday.  
Police said Sohail Mollah, 26, member of Shibpur thana unit Juba Dal, came under attack near Shaheed Asad Government College at about 2:00 am while he was returning home after attending a cultural programme. He was rushed to the upazila health complex where the on-duty doctors declared him dead. A case was filed.

UP chairman shot dead by terrorists

**UNB, Madaripur**  
A union parishad (UP) chairman was shot dead by a group of terrorists in Shibchar upazila of Madaripur on Tuesday evening.  
Police and witnesses said Nilokhi union parishad chairman Delwar Hossain Bhuiyan, 50, came under bullet attack when he was returning home after witnessing one suicide case nearby his house. A case was filed.

One killed in Jamalpur road mishap

**UNB, Jamalpur**  
A man was killed and 10 people were injured in a road accident at Daripara in Jamalpur town on Dhaka-Jamalpur highway Monday.  
Police and witnesses said the mishap occurred when a speeding truck rammed into a passenger tempo killing Habibur Rahman, 35, on the spot. The injured were admitted to general hospital. Police seized the truck and arrested its driver. A case was filed.

Natore AL leader arrested

**UNB, Natore**  
A local Awami League (AL) leader was arrested Monday on charge of assaulting an Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) in 1997.  
Aftab Hossain Jhufu, AL organising secretary of Lalpur upazila, was arrested as soon as former UNO of Lalpur filed a case with local police station for assaulting him in his office four years ago. In his case, the UNO alleged that Aftab along with his accomplices attacked his office in December 1997, assaulted him and snatched some official documents.

Victory fair begins at Ashuganj

**UNB, Brahmanbaria**  
As part of the Victory Day celebrations, a week-long fair begun at Ashuganj Government Labour Welfare Centre in Brahmanbaria on Sunday.  
State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ukil Abdus Sattar inaugurated the fair. Labour and Employment Minister Abdullah Al Noman was present in the inaugural function as chief guest.

Terrorists attack house of UP chairman

**UNB, Feni**  
Terrorists attacked with guns and bombs the house of Jailaskar UP chairman of Dagonbhuiyan upazila in Feni at dead of night on Wednesday.  
Chairman Pear Ahmed, also Awami League leader, was not in the house when terrorists fired bullets and hurled bombs at the pucca house damaging the walls and windows. Inmates of the house said finding Pear Ahmed absent in the house terrorists assaulted his 72-year-old mother Ohidunnesa. No case was filed till Thursday evening.

Female madrasa student kidnapped

**UNB, Laxmipur**  
A female madrasa student who was kidnapped from West Chandpur area at Ramganj upazila of Laxmipur three days ago could not yet be rescued.  
Witnesses said Bindu Akhter, 12, a student of Noorani Madrasa, was picked up by a teacher of the madrasa with the help of his accomplices at gunpoint.

Father, son injured by bomb splinters

**UNB, Jessore**  
A man and his son were injured by bomb splinters during an attack on a house at Jagannathpur village of Chowgachha upzila in Jessore on Wednesday.  
Police said a group of pro-BNP miscreants attacked the house of UP member and Awami League activist Abul Kashem in the village and started looting valuables at gunpoint. At one stage, the attackers exploded several bombs leaving two of Kashem's neighbours - Shamsu Mollik, 60, and his son Abdus Salam, 25, injured. They were admitted to hospital. Police said Shamsu and his son came to Kashem's house to resist the attackers. Previous enmity was said to be the reason behind the attack.

Valuables worth Tk 10 lakh looted

**UNB, Comilla**  
Valuables worth about Tk 10 lakh were looted in a string of armed robberies in three houses and two pharmacies at Choudhagram upazila on Sunday-Monday.  
Witnessed said a band of armed bandits, numbering 15-20, broke into the house of Ramjan Miah of Babuchi village on Monday and looted valuables, including cash and gold ornaments, worth Tk 60,000 confining the family members in a room. Later, the armed robbers stormed the house of Ratan Miah of the same village and took away cash and valuables. Earlier on Sunday, armed robbers looted valuables from two pharmacies in the same upazila leaving one of the pharmacy owners injured.

Armyman critically injured by terrorists

**UNB, Jhalakathi**  
An armyman, who recently went on LPR, was critically injured in a terrorist attack at Ithor village in Sadar upazila of Jhalakathi Monday night.  
Family and medical sources said a gang of terrorists called sergeant Rafiqul Islam out of his house in the evening and took him to an abandoned house where they beat him up and then chopped mercilessly. They later left him in an unconscious state presuming him dead. On information, police rescued Islam and sent him to local hospital.

Alleged dollar smuggler arrested

**UNB, Jessore**  
Police arrested an alleged dollar smuggler along with 1,000 dollars at Kholadanga in Sadar upazila of Jessore on Thursday on his way to bordering area.  
Detective Brach (DB) of police got information that Nurul Amin Khan of Baridhara in capital was smuggling US dollar 100,000 to India. They intercepted his car and recovered only 1,000 dollars from his possession. A case was filed with Kotwali police in this connection.

PBS move to realise outstanding bills

**UNB, Thakurgaon**  
Thakurgaon Polli Biddut Samiti (PBS) has suspended power supply to the deep tubewells of defaulter farmers to realise outstanding bills of Tk 2.76 crore.  
PBS source said they were forced to take the decision as the huge amount has been lying unpaid for long with the irrigation sector under Thakurgaon Deep Tubewell Project. The Samiti has launched a motivational campaign to realise the outstanding bills, but there is no response from the clients. Mofazzal Hossain, General Manager of PBS, said farmers will have to pay Tk 30,000 as security money to reconnect the electric lines during the peak season of irrigation. "Payment of at least 50 per cent of the outstanding bills have to be confirmed within June next year, otherwise the connection would not be given," he added.

Tele link remains cut off for five days

**UNB, Jhalakathi**  
Tele link between Kathalia upazila and the rest parts of the country remained cut off for five days till Tuesday, making the businesspeople and newsmen the worst sufferers.  
The disruption was caused by technical faults at Nokia circuit and rectifier machine of Kathalia telephone exchange. Local telephone officials sought help from BTTH head office in Dhaka after an expert here failed to restore the telephone service despite his two days of hectic efforts. Besides, the lone card phone booth in the upazila, which was damaged on April 9, 1999 in a devastating cyclone, is yet to be repaired.

Incidents of acid attack up in Mymensingh

Four including 3 women fall victims in 14 days

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Incidents of acid attack have increased in Mymensingh. Four persons, including three women received acid burn injuries in separate incidents within 14 days. Of the victims, one is a little girl aged about 3 only.

Three persons of a family received acid burn injuries at Mokamia Adarsha village in Phulpur upazila in the early hours of December 22. The victims included husband, wife and their little girl.

The victims were identified as Roisuddin, 35, his wife, Kazali, 25, and their little girl Rashida, 3.

Police said, quoting the victims, a group of miscreants threw acid through the window when they were in deep sleep at about 2:30 am on December 22 night. The victims had previous enmity with the acid throwers over land. After the heinous act, the culprits fled the scene.

The victims were first admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH). But later they were shifted to Acid Survivors' Foundation in Dhaka for better treatment. Local BRAC office made the arrangement to send the victims to Dhaka.

A case was lodged in this regard. But none was arrested. In another incident, on December 9 night, a college girl suffered severe acid burn injuries as miscreants threw acid on her while she was asleep at village Charpara in Trishal upazila.

The victim was identified as Anwara Begum, 18, daughter of Md. Akkas Ali. She was also a Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) candidate from Trishal Kazi Nazrul Islam College.

Police said, quoting family sources, neighbours Kalam, Sattar, Salam, Idris and Rashid sneaked into her house at about 3 am and threw acid which burnt her face.

Critically injured Anwara was admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) where the attending doctors suspected that both her eyes might have been damaged. Later Anwara was shifted to Dhaka for better treatment.

Akkas Ali informed the reporters that there was a long dispute with his influential neighbours over 3.5 kathas of land and the attack was a sequel to the conflict. But the alleged persons denied their involvement in the incident.

Earlier, on September 2, the same gang physically assaulted Anwara and she had to be admitted to hospital.

A case was lodged in this regard. Police arrested one person for his alleged involvement in this heinous crime.

But Akkas Ali told The Daily Star that the accused persons were moving freely and continuously threatening him to withdraw the case or face dire consequence. He also said that police were not taking proper steps to nab the culprits adding "now we feel in secured."

Achhia Khatun, mother of the victims told in tearful eyes "We want proper justice as we are poor while the culprits are influential."

Akkas Ali also informed that his son Jamal Uddin, 24, have been missing for about four months. A case was also lodged in this regard.

**UNB from Habiganj reports:** Two women, one of them an SSC candidate, suffered serious burn injuries in separate acid attacks in two upazilas of Habiganj on Monday-Tuesday.

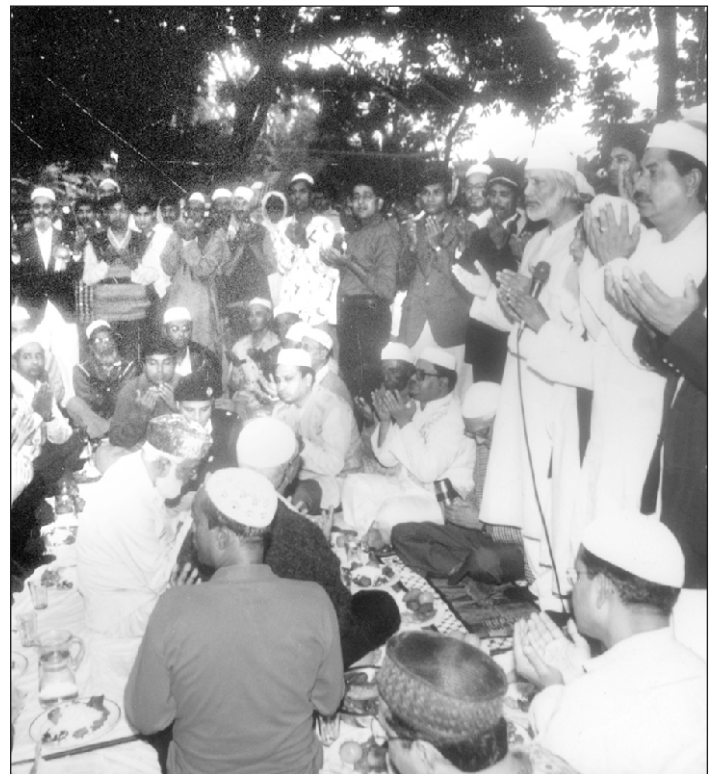
Police said a youth hurled acid at Shamsunnahar, 35, wife of Islam Uddin at village Baghaurain Nabiganj upazila, when she went out to buy medicine at about 1:30 pm Tuesday.

She was undergoing treatment at local hospital with burns in her hands and head.

She is believed to have fallen victim to the acid attack because of her son's enmity with the criminals.

In another incident at Jarulia village in Chunarughat upazila, a youth threw acid at Parveen Akhter, 16, an SSC candidate from Jarulia Islamia Dakhil Madrasa, as she was relaxing at her house at about 8 pm Monday.

Parveen said the youth attacked her as she refused his offer of love. She was being treated at local hospital.



Information Minister Dr Abdul Maveen Khan offering munajat at a milad mahfil arranged on Wednesday on the occasion of the death anniversary of former Food Minister Abdul Momen Khan at village Charnagardi in Palash upazila of Narsingdi.

Govt losing revenue from procured forest resources from Sundarbans

Fault in existing measurement system

UNB, Bagerhat

A new measurement method introduced in 1999 to realise tax against procured forest resources from the Sundarbans could not yet yield positive results in raising the revenue due to reluctance of taxpayers to accept the new system.

According to competent sources, the government is being deprived of 17-25 per cent revenue earning from procured forest resources from the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, due to fault in its existing measurement system.

They said although the Sundarbans West Zone has been able to convince bawalis (woodcutters) to renew BLCs (Boat Loading Capacity) for their boats, the Eastern Zone of the Sundarbans has not yet got response from the bawalis despite fixing of renewal date twice.

The last two-day time for renewal of BLCs expired Monday and the response in this regard was very poor, said a forest official preferring anonymity.

The bawalis have refrained from renewing BLCs for their boats on the plea that the new system would be more complicated and harmful to them.

Under the new system, the mean width of boat is supposed to be measured while its sunk portion be determined in loaded and unloaded condition in addition to measuring the depth of water.

All these data are expected to help measure the capacity of a boat more accurately than the existing method.

The government approved the new system in 1999-2000 fiscal, but it could not be enforced due to negligence of the forest officials as well as pressure from the bawalis.

Forest Officer of the Sundarbans East Zone Abdul Mabud told that they continued their efforts to convince the bawalis to renew their BLCs and hoped that over 500 boats would be given approval soon.

In the last fiscal year, a total of Tk 7.5 crore was realised in revenue from the Sundarbans.

Meanwhile, the Sundarbans East Zone has fixed a target to collect Tk 2.5 crore in revenue in the current fiscal.



Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General M Harun-Ar-Rashid, Bir Protik handing over the trophy to the best all-round student-officer on the occasion of the Certificate Awarding Ceremony of the Officers' Gunnery Staff Course at the Artillery Centre and School, Halishahar, Chittagong on Wednesday.

New convening body of B'baria Muktijoddha Sangsad

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Ending all speculations, the government at last has formed a new convening committee of Muktijoddha Sangsad. Brahmanbaria district unit command dissolving the old one.

District BNP general secretary and veteran freedom fighter Syed Ekramur Reza has been made convenor while Zakir Hossain joint convenor and Mizanur Rahman Bhuiyan member secretary of the 11-member convening committee.

According to a letter signed by State Minister for Liberation War Affairs and Chairman of the Central Command Council of Muktijoddha Sangsad Redwan Ahmed, the old committee will have over charge to the convening committee within three days of receiving the letter.

The convening committee like a full-fledged committee will look after all activities of the Sangsad and hold election on the date specified in its constitution.

5 UP chairmen allege ...

UNB, Jhalakathi

Five chairmen of different union parishads (UPs) in Nalchiti upazila alleged that the terrorist acts unleashed by the ruling party activists after the Oct 1 elections were still continuing in their areas.

Chairman of Kushangal union M Matiur Rahman Sarder, chairman of Ranapasha M Siddiqur Rahman, chairman of Maghor union Mohammad Ali Khan, chairman of Siddhakathi union M Obaid and chairman of Dapdapia union Abdul Aziz raised the allegation at a press conference in Jhalakathi on Tuesday.

They said they were still on the run and cannot return to their respective areas due to constant threat by the BNP men.

They further alleged that armed hoodlums under the shelter of local ruling party leaders continued their toll collection, loot and repression on women, forcing many villagers to leave their houses.

Law and order worsens in Satkhira

Law enforcers allegedly help criminals

UNB, Satkhira

Despite the government's tough campaign against the terrorists, the law and order situation in Satkhira has improved little since the October 1 national election.

Police records showed two murders, a good number of robberies and snatching, and an incident of acid attack took place in Satkhira this month apart from toll collection by the ruling party men.

In some cases, the law enforcers themselves are allegedly helping the criminals.

Munsur Ali, 40, of Ashashuni upazila was abducted on December 13 and his body was recovered on December 16.

On December 18, unidentified terrorists strangled Jamal, 42, in Kolaroa upazila.



Members of Ananya Theatre, a cultural organisation, parade the streets of Magura town in a colourful procession on the occasion of Eid Reunion recently.

Housewife sustains acid burn injuries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife sustained burn injuries as her husband threw acid on her at their residence at Char Daulat Khan, Karpashiya in Gazipur Wednesday night.

The victim, Selina, 22, wife of Anware Miah was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with burn injuries last week.

Selina was married with Anware for about 11 years. The husband used to torture Selina frequently showing many pretexts.

Selina recently left her husband's residence and went to her father's home. Anware went to his father-in-law's residence and asked Selina to come back, but she refused.

The husband threw acid while Selina was sleeping in the early hours. Selina sustained burn injuries in her back and right hand.

Selina was sent to DMCH for treatment.

People of 3 hill dists face acute water crisis

UNB, Khagrachhari

Some 5,000 deep and shallow tube-wells went out of order in three hill districts, worsening drinking water crisis.

People of three district Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban are likely to face acute water crisis in the days to come as work on a number of projects of Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) to supply water to 25 upazilas came to a halt due to lack of funds.

DPHE sources said some 5,297 tube-wells out of 20,572, had long been lying inoperative.

They said 2,138 deep tube-wells in Khagrachhari while 2,144 in Rangamati and 1,018 in Bandarban remained out of order.

Of the inoperative tube-wells 781 are shallow, 2,337 of deep set type, 1,283 of tara deep set, 30 of super tara and 861 of other categories.

Besides, the work on the five-year CHT Water Supply Strengthening Project remained stopped, also for lack of funds.

Under project, some 3,350 ring wells, one lakh tara tube-wells and 95 shallow tube-wells, 13 unit water refiners, 53 tube-wells, eight overhead tanks and 200 kms of pipeline were planned to be installed by 2003.

Patuakhali Chamber election held

UNB, Patuakhali

Aminul Haque Ahsan was elected the president of Patuakhali Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

Three candidates vied for the post of president in the election held on Wednesday. Ahsan bagged 10 votes while his nearest rival Fazole Ali Khan got 9. Shafiqur Rahman Chan Mia was elected senior vice president and Moniruzaman Khan vice president.