

## NEWS SNAPS

## Five arrested with firearms

BSS, *Khulna*

Khulna police arrested five persons including a listed criminal with firearms on Tuesday.

According to police, Ruhul Amin, Noor Mohammad, Kamal Gaji, Nahid and Tariqul Islam were arrested on the basis of secret information from Jinnah Para, Mollah Para and Khal par. Police also recovered two single barrel guns from their possession. Of them, Noor Mohammed, Nahid and Tariqul Islam Tariq are accused of separate murder cases. Nahid is a listed criminal of Khulna thana. Tariqul Islam is also an accused of Public Safety Act case with Sonadanga thana. A case under the Arms Act was lodged against the arrested with Khulna thana in this connection.

## Two nabbed with pipe-gun

BSS, *Natore*

Police arrested two persons and recovered a pipe-gun from their possession at village Baluabasua in Singra upazila on Monday.

Acting on a tip-off, Singra thana police team raided a house of village Baluabasua in Singra upazila. Police arrested Baddhan and his elder brother Sohel and recovered a pipe-gun from their possession. A case was filed with Singra thana in this connection.

## Emancipation for 7,000 slum women in Jessore, at last

NICOLE MEIER, *back from Jessore*

More than 7,000 women in Jessore have become self-reliant after six years for the economical, social and cultural life of their communities by developing their own "Peoples Institutions" within the so-called Urban Community Development Programme (UCDP).

Jagorani Chakra (JC), a national non-governmental organisation (NGO) that had initiated this project, and Enfants du Monde (EDM), the Swiss NGO assisting it financially, handed it over to the locals on November 7th. Almost 15,000

people attended the ceremony.

"Six years ago this was our dream and today it is a reality", a young woman of Jessore says. And another one adds: "We can send our children to school and nowadays we are supported by our husbands and families. In the beginning yet they had been sceptical."

The biggest dream of them all is to once rule their own high school. Although this might remain a dream at least for a long time these women have proved that they can achieve a lot. They came out of their slums, established schools, groups for

health and social work, group savings and credit schemes supported by JC and EDM.

Since 1996 this programme has been operating in 34 slum areas in the Jessore Municipal Area. Each area has the support of a Community Development Committee that is formed of the elite, educated and more affluent residents of the same area. Each area organisation elects a representative to a Central Committee that will eventually take over the responsibility of the programme from JC.

This take over has become

reality for more than 7,000 women of all the 34 organisations on November 7th. In a huge ceremony in Jessore they celebrated this event. The estimated number of spectators was almost 15,000.

Juerg Casserini, Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Switzerland, Elisabeth Haemmig, Swiss Programme Director of EDM and Lily Jebunnessa, Regional Coordinator of EDM were present as well as Azadul Kabir Arzoo, Executive Director of JC, John Biswas, Chairperson of the Central Committee and Archana Biwas, UCDP coordinator.



Juerg Casserini, Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of Switzerland symbolically hands over documents to a representative on behalf of the slum women at a function in Jessore recently.

## Three youths sent to jail for toll collection

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Three youths in Magura were handed over to police recently for their alleged involvement in collecting toll using printed receipts of the Puja celebration committee on the occasion of traditional Katyani Puja which began here on November 10.

Zamrutala Puja Mandop committed in Magura town caught Sman Roy, Debashish and Hira Bose on Monday morning for collecting toll from the adjoining districts of Chauadnaga, Jhenidah, Jessore and Narail.

Police produced them before court under section 54 from where they were sent to jail hajaj.



The river Modhumati threatens Mollikpur Academy, a high school at Lohagara upazila in Narail. The river already devoured a vast tract of land and immovable property in Kalia and Lohagara.

## Narail Diary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Narail*

## Tiger caught by villagers

A tiger was caught here by some villagers at village Jhikra in Lohagara upazila recently. The tiger roared inside a jungle near the house of Bellal. Bellal with his other associates managed to net and catch the tiger. Hundreds of people are come to see the tiger in the house of Bellal. Interested buyers have raised the price of the tiger at more than Tk 20,000.

## Chitra Bridge yet to be opened

The long desired bridge over the river Chitra has been completed three years back, but the approach roads on both sides of the bridge have not yet been completed. The one-kilometre eastern approach road is yet to be constructed. The work remained totally stopped for long three years. Public in general and passengers are facing great problem while buses and automobiles remain standing on both sides of the Narail ferry Ghat for hours together. People have become frustrated as they don't know at all whether the bridge would be opened after completion of its approach roads or the government has any other plan after spending crores of taka in this project.

## Acid thrown on retired policeman

Criminals threw acid and burnt recently the whole body of a retired policeman at village Duttapara in Sadar upazila here.

The victim, Anwar Hossain, 42, was rushed to the Narail Sadar Hospital immediately. As his condition deteriorated, he was shifted to the 250-bed hospital in Khulna. According to family sources, five or six miscreants threw acid on his whole body by holding his neck while he was coming from Narail town at night. The passers-by rescued him after hearing his scream.

Family sources said their rival group attempted to kill the victim, who fled away as people approached. It has been learnt that the miscreants kidnapped the victim's married daughter a few months back. She is yet to be traced till writing of this report. The criminals tried to throw acid on another daughter of Anwar Hossain a few months ago at village Ramsiddi in Sadar upazila but failed due to intervention of the public. The accused are yet to be nabbed. No case has been filed in this connection till writing of this report.

## Gobra-Narail road now a death trap

The road leading to Gobra bazaar from Narail Sadar has become a death trap. The distance from Narail Sadar to Noapara bazaar is 30 kilometers, but the condition of the road has become so worse that plying of buses and even light vehicles has become impossible since last year.

The road running between Kararbill and Gobra bazaar has become unfit even for human movement on foot. About one to one and a half inches deep ditches have developed resulting in trouble for public. No step has been taken by the concerned authority to mitigate the sufferings of people.

Gobra bazaar is a very important bazaar for the businessmen. The affected people submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner (DC) of Narail in this regard, but no action was taken by him till filing of this report.

## Floating hospital arrives Narail

The floating hospital "Life Boat" has arrived at Narail recently. It will stay here for three months to serve the general people.

Besides health education, "Life Boat" has eye, ENT and orthopaedic treatment facilities. The three storied floating hospital has an operation theatre, 11 beds for patients and three beds for post operative treatment. It has 22 officers and staff including doctors and nurses. There are facilities for pathological tests, radiology department and germ-free apparatus for operation.

## Most outlawed activists in Magura evade wrath of army

HOSSAIN SERAJ, *Magura*

Although peace-loving people in four upazilas of Magura district now feel safe following the Army crack down, but most of the outlawed criminals are yet to be arrested as they have already gone into hiding.

Army arrested at least 36 people including three outlaws and some other listed criminals since the 'operation clean heart' began in the district on October 17. Of them, 14 people were sent to jail hajaj (custody) on detention and others were shown arrested in different criminal cases filed with different police stations in the district. Army also recovered a Shurter-gun and a pipe-gun in different raids till filing of this report on November 12.

But conscious people here are very much worried with their future as most of the outlawed criminals went into hiding, but they will come back after return of the Army to the barracks.

Competent sources said, although two infamous outlawed leaders in the area Bidhan and Bobin are now in jail, most of their followers have been staying in their respective areas and passing nights at other's houses to avoid Army arrest.

Investigation revealed, at least 4 outlawed parties and two private bahinis (forces) had been operating their activities in four upazilas of the district. The parties are Sramajili Mukhtifouz, Purba Banglar Communist party, Gono Bahini of JSD, Sarbahara party, Titop Bahini and Mitul Bahini. These bahinis possess huge fire arms including sub-machine gun Chinese rifles and sawed-off-rifles (cutt-rifles).

Before the starting of the 'operation clean hart' activists of those outlawed groups were very much active and made the people's lives miserable through their misdeeds

including kidnapping for ransom, silent toll collections and other criminal activities.

At present the peace-loving people here are free from the misdeeds of these criminals and passing their days tension-free. But the people here are apprehending that the criminal's oppression would again rise after the withdrawal of army camps from here.

"We want permanent curbing of criminal activities so that people can pass their nights in peace even after withdrawal of the Army men, which is only possible if all the political and social leaders show interest and co-operate together", said a villager of Hazipur in Magura Sadar upazila.

Conscious people in the district now urge the authorities concerned to nab the real culprits immediately.

## Open market sale of rice in Munshiganj

BSS, *Munshiganj*

Open market sale (OMS) of rice has started in 68 unions and two municipalities to keep prices of foodgrains stable in the holy month of Ramadan.

Two dealers have been appointed for each union, three dealers each for six upazilas and five dealers for the district headquarters.

Dealers at union level are selling 500 Kg of rice a day and 1000 Kg of rice is allotted for dealers in two municipalities for sale daily. The government has fixed the price under OMS at Tk 11 per kg from Tk 12 per kg to give further relief to the poor people. Separate committees were formed at district, upazila and union levels to monitor and supervise the OMS operation.



A competitor receives prize from Shafi Ahmed Chowdhury, a member of parliament (MP), on conclusion of the education week held recently at Fenchuganj upazila in Sylhet.

## UP elections Enthusiasm among voters in Narail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Narail*

Announcement of dates for holding the country-wide union parishad (UP) polls has generated enthusiasm among the voters as well as the probable candidates in the district.

The possible candidates are adopting various means to woo the voters. These include offering refreshment, mass contact in hats and bazaars and visiting houses and exchanging pleasantries.

The candidates have already started distributing posters and handbills, holding meetings here and there in their respective localities, meeting voters either individually or in groups to convince them of their candidature.

Colourful posters containing photographs of the candidates can now be seen in every village and market in the district.

The candidates, most of whom are young and educated, who are expected to join the election race for the first time, are now busy in exchanging views with the voters

and seeking blessings of the elderly people.

District election officer Syed Amir Ali told that there are over 4,35,522 voters in 699 villages of 38 union parishads in three upazilas of the district having a total population of over eight lakh.

## Discussion on Revolution Day

BSS, *Jessore*

Information Minister Tariqul Islam has urged people to build a prosperous country consolidating democracy with the spirit of November 7, 1975, the milestone of national spirit.

The minister was addressing as the chief guest a discussion marking the National Revolution and Solidarity Day at the BD Hall here recently. It was chaired by local Deputy Commissioner Mahfuzur Rahman.