

## NEWS SNAPS

## Youth 'commits' suicide

**UNB, Tangail**  
A youth allegedly committed suicide by setting fire on his body in the town Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Titulal, 20, son of Lal Mahmud of the town. Locals said Titulal following an altercation with his mother set fire on his body Tuesday night and sustained serious injuries.

He was rushed to Tangail General Hospital in a critical condition and died there in the morning.

An unnatural death (UD) case was filed with police.

## Brother-in-law killed by widow

**UNB, Thakurgaon**  
After killing her brother-in-law, a widow surrendered to the police here on Wednesday.

Police said the dead, Abdul Jabbar, of the village locked into a quarrel with Alema Begum, widow of his elder brother, over a family feud.

At one stage of altercation, Alema hit Jabbar with a machete killing him on the spot. After the killing Alema, mother of two children, surrendered to Ruhia police camp. She was sent to jail.

## Body recovered

**UNB, Narayanganj**  
Police on Friday recovered the body of a youth from Akbar Nagar in Fatulla here Thursday.

Police sent the body to the General Hospital morgue for autopsy. Police said unknown assailants chopped Habibur Rahman, 17, son of Moslem Ali Halder of Rajapur in Jhalakati, to death near a brick-field. A case was filed with police.

## Fugitive arrested

**UNB, Keraniganj**  
A ringleader of a robber gang, who remained fugitive after being convicted by a court, was arrested from Hajratpur area here Friday.

## Acid attack on five housewives in Satkhira

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira**

At least five housewives sustained acid and kerosene burn injuries in Satkhira during the last two months.

Of the victims, two housewives who received kerosene burn injuries succumbed to their injuries.

Runu Ghosh, 18, daughter of Nirnjan Ghosh of village Sakhipur in Debdaha upazila sustained burn injuries as one of her neighbours throw acid on her at about 8 p.m on October 3. She was treated in the local hospital.

Family sources said the neighbour named Ajihar Ali of the same village threw acid on her because the girl refused to accept the marriage proposal by Ajihar Ali. She was treated at the Satkhira Sadar Hospital.

Sufia Begum, 40, wife of

Akbar Ali of village Debnagar in Sadar upazila received burn injuries when a group of miscreants threw acid on her at dead of night on October 26.

When the victim was sleeping in her house, a group of miscreants namely Moteleb, Adam Ali, Kamrul and Manirul of the same village threw acid through the window. She was taken to Satkhira hospital in a critical condition. She is now being treated at the hospital. The neighbours have attributed the attack to land dispute.

Rawshan Ara, 25, wife of Ruhul Amin of Shirashuni in Tala upazila succumbed to burn injuries when her husband poured kerosene on her body and torched her on November 22. She was taken to Satkhira hospital in a critical condition. As her

condition, deteriorated, she was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she succumbed to her burn injuries. She fell victim as her parents failed to pay dowry of their son-in-law.

Khodeja Khatun, 22, wife of Noor Islam and her two-year-old daughter Sonali, 2, of village Noakati in Tala upazila suffered burn injuries when unidentified miscreants threw acid on them on November 28. They were admitted to Satkhira hospital.

Noorjahan, 21, wife of Mizanur Rahman of village Taltala in Sadar upazila succumbed to her burn injuries at Satkhira hospital on December 5 when her foster-father poured kerosene on her and torched her. She was taken to Satkhira hospital in a critical condition where she succumbed to her injuries.

## 45 licensed arms in Magura missing

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura**

A total of 129 licensed fire arms were deposited at different police stations in Magura district following the government order to surrender arms, official sources said.

The district Collector office sources said, there are 235 licenses in Magura district and the number of sanctioned arms against the licenses is 174.

Sources further informed, the licensed arms in the district include 144 SBBL and DBBL guns, 19 point two two bore rifles and 11 pistols.

Officials, however, said, three revolvers, three pistols, 83 SBBL guns, 26 DBBL guns and 15 point two two bore rifles were deposited in the district following the government order asking the holders of licensed arms to deposit their arms by November 21.

But at least 45 arms were not deposited as per government order to surrender licensed arms, which are still untraced.

The arms which are not deposited might be in possession of criminals.

## SIRAJGANJ diary

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj**

## Elderly man killed in road mishap

An old man was killed in a road accident Hajee Road at Gandail. The victim was identified as Ishaqueuddin, 70, son of late Taher Sheikh of village Gandhail Moddha para in Kazipur upazila.

Police said when the victim was crossing the Sirajganj- Kazipur Road over the Hajee Road bridge then a Sirajganj bound bus hit him resulting his spot death. A case has been lodged with Kazipur police station in this connection.

## Villagers' clash leaves one dead

One person was killed and at least 24 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups at village Char Bagda in Ullapara upazila. Twenty houses were also damaged in the clash.

Police and witnesses said there was a long standing conflict among the villagers of Saratol and Char Bagda villages. Recently the conflict took a serious turn and both the villagers locked in a clash over a dispute on graveyard. One person named Ayub Ali of village Saratol was killed and at least 24 people were hurt. A case was lodged against the Char Bagda villagers by the Saratol villagers. Seven critically injured persons were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital.

## Girl kidnapped

A little girl who is a madrasah student was allegedly kidnapped by some armed miscreants recently from village Dippajan in Tarash upazila.

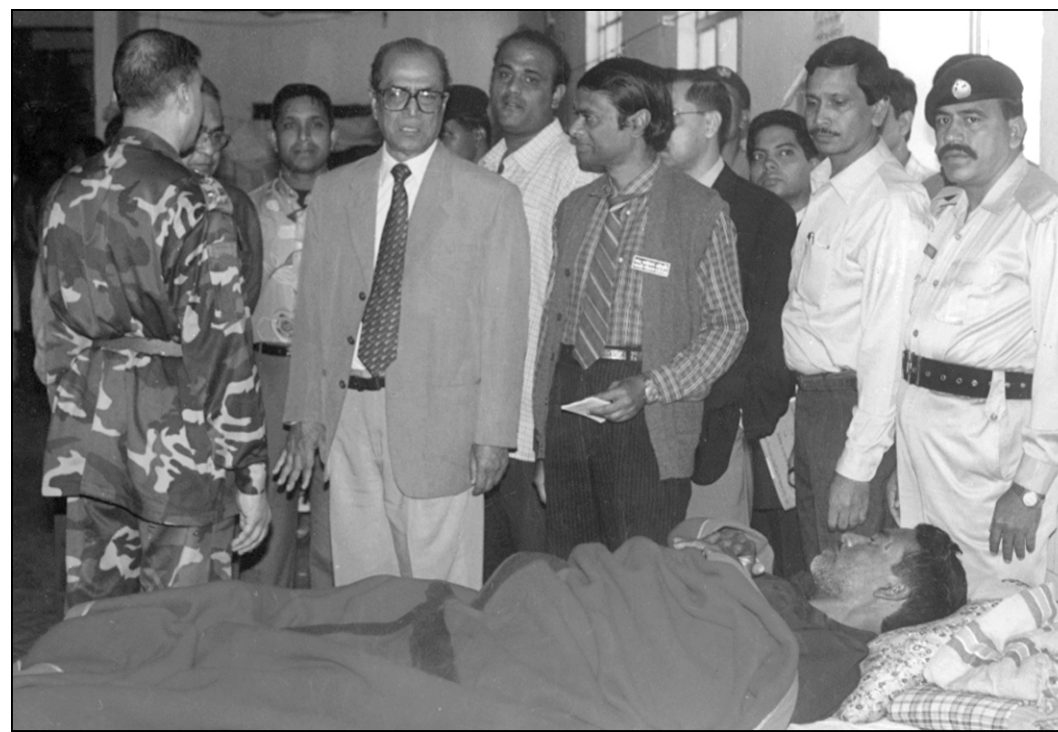
Police sources said Rebeka Khatun, 13, daughter of Abdur Rasid of village Dippajan in Tarash upazila was allegedly kidnapped by some armed miscreants at gun point when she was working at her house. A case was lodged with Tarash police station in this connection.

## Youth chopped to death

An youth was chopped to death by some miscreants at village Dadpur in Ullapara upazila recently.

The victim was identified as Atiqul Islam, 20, son of Abdus Samad Khandoker of Dadpur in Ullapara upazila.

Police said Atiqul and his younger brother Ariful were sleeping in a room in their house. Some miscreants stormed into the house and chopped him by a Chinese axe and he died on the spot. Police recovered the dead body.



Justice Sultan Hossain Khan visits a ward of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital on December 14 where the injured victims of December 7 bomb blast incidents in four cinema halls in Mymensingh are under treatment. Justice Khan leads the one member investigation committee formed to probe the tragic incidents.

## Union Parisad election schedule for Noakhali, Thakurgaon

**UNB, Noakhali**

The union parisad (UP) polls schedule for Noakhali and Thakurgaon has been announced.

The election schedule for the ensuing UP elections of 74 unions out of 82 in Noakhali was

## Price-hike of soyabean oil in Faridpur

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur**

Acute crisis of Soyabean oil, one of the daily necessities, has been prevailing in all the markets of Faridpur district, causing much inconveniences to people, especially the poor.

Soyabean is now selling between Tk 48 and Tk 52 a kg at Titumir market and Haji Shariatullah market of the town. But reports are pouring here from far flung areas of the district that Soyabean is selling at those places at Tk 50 to 60 a kg.

When asked about the price, a seller told The Daily Star that dishonest wholesalers of oil are partially responsible for this price-hike adding that they are selling Soyabean oil at high rate defying the government rate fixed at Tk 40 a kg.

## Hunters active as winter birds arrive

**UNB, Rangamati**

As the migratory birds start arriving here, a section of hunters have become active to catch the guest birds.

The birds caught from water bodies in Longodu, Borkol, Jubachhari and Bilaichori upazilas are being sold at various places in the district.

It is alleged that hunting of the birds by the professional and amateur hunters is being carried out before the nose of the members of the law enforcing agencies ignoring the ban.

announced Sunday last.

The election schedule for the remaining eight unions could not be announced due to boundary-related dispute and not completing the five-year term.

The elections to the 74 UPs will be held between January 25 and March 8.

Another report adds: The election schedule for the coming UP elections in 51 unions of Thakurgaon was also announced recently.

The election will be held between January 25 and March 26.

## Joypurhat road mishap death toll now 3

**UNB, Joypurhat**

One more worker of Palli Bidyut Samity (PBS) died in the December 14 road accident here rising the death toll to three.

The dead was identified as Nurunnabi, 31, an apprentice lineman of PBS. He succumbed to his injuries Thursday on the way to Dhaka from Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

Hospital sources said condition of another injured worker Abul Kasem, now under treatment at General Hospital here, was also

stated to be critical.

The mishap occurred when a sand-laden truck hit two motorbikes carrying four PBS workers and then ploughed through an electronic shop at Himchi bazaar on Joypurhat-Bogra highway on December 14.

The four critical injured PBS workers were first admitted to general hospital here and later shifted to RMCH.

But Habibur Rahman died on the way to Rajshahi and Ibrahim succumbed at the hospital.



A sequence from a drama staged by some child artists on the premises of Swadhinata Bhaban on the occasion of Bijoy Mela in Gaibandha recently. The district administration organised the drama as part of their Victory Day programme.

## New lease of life for lepers

**BSS, Chandraghona**

Hundreds of leprosy patients, abandoned by their families and society, have got back their normal life at a leprosy hospital at Chandraghona, a hamlet in Kaptai upazila of Rangamati.

They have been treated and operated upon for the so-called deadly disease at the Chandraghona Leprosy Centre (CLC) since April 1985.

Babul Ghose, 42, of Goalpara in Chittagong has been cured after seven years of treatment at the CLC. "I was not accepted by my family as I had become untouchable because of the disease," says Babul, a shoemaker for leprosy patients in CLC.

He was compelled to come back to the hospital, got a job and married another leper, Parul Ghose. She has also been cured. "We are now happy with our three normal kids," Parul said.

Leprosy, which has been claiming human beings since 600 BS across the globe, is a chronic infectious disease caused by a bacteria called Mycobacterium Leprae, mainly affecting the skin and the periphery nerves.

In Bangladesh, according to available official statistics, the

estimated leprosy cases were 15,000 in 2000. But nine northern districts including Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Sirajganj, Panchagarh, Nilphamari, Thakurgaon, Bogra and Pabna and two city corporations together constitute 73 per cent of the total cases.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), in 1995, there were an estimated 1.8 million leprosy cases in the world. Asia has the largest share with about 62 per cent followed by Africa with 34 per cent.

CLC was set up in 1913 as a unit of Chandraghona Christian Mission Hospital established in 1908 by Baptist Missionary Society at Chandraghona, 50 kilometres from the port city of Chittagong. It was modernised and turned into a full-fledged leprosy hospital in 1985.

Kamrunnahar, 35, an inmate of the hospital told journalists, "I got married to my husband Azizul Haque in 1986. We had a very happy conjugal and family life with our healthy and lovely baby. But leprosy brought misfortune to my life in 1987. My husband abandoned me."

Many female lepers like Kamrunnahar are now happy to get 'a new life' after treatment in the hospital. Jostna Ara, 30, Peera

Begum, 20, Nurjahan, 22, Sadhana Barua, 50, and Monoara, 25, all are abandoned by their husbands, have similar story to tell.

Doctors at the Hospital told that although leprosy is a disabling disease, with early diagnosis and proper treatment it is possible to cure without any damaging after-effects. "It is diagnosable, treatable and curable," Superintendent of CLC Dr Mong Stephen Chowdhury said.

"It has become our home. The doctors, nurses and staff of the centre are very much cordial to us," said Shahjahan, 42, who is under treatment at the hospital since 1982. The leprosy centre at Chandraghona is being run by the Chittagong Leprosy Control Project (CLCP) since 1994. The project has 28 clinics in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar to provide preliminary and outdoor treatment to the patients.

In line with international pledges, Bangladesh had declared the goal to eliminate leprosy by the year 2000 under its National Leprosy Elimination Project (NLCP). According to the Project Director of CLCP, Dr Mong Stephen Chowdhury, Bangladesh achieved the goal in 1998, two years ahead of the target.