

## NEWS SNAPS

## Two killed in road mishap

**UNB, Brahmanbaria**  
Two people were killed and four others injured in collision between a bus and a tempo on Akhaura-Chandura road in Brahmanbaria on Saturday.

The dead were identified as Janu Mia, 25, and Wahid Mia, 35. The injured - Mohammad Ali, Ali Asgar, Dulal and Bhutto - were given treatment in the hospital. Police seized both the vehicles. A case was filed.

## One killed in B'baria clash

**UNB, Brahmanbaria**  
A man was killed and four others were injured in a bloody clash at village Snighar in Nasimgar upazila Friday.

Witnesses said Shohrab Mia was killed when a clash erupted between two groups of villagers over cutting soil. The injured - Insar Mia, 40, Ashik Mia, 35, Shahjahan Mia, 35, Ashik, 29 were admitted to the upazila health complex. A case was filed with the police.

## Warm clothes distributed

**UNB, Panchagarh**  
Speaker Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar at a function at Tetulia upazila distributed winter clothes among the distressed people Saturday.

Barrister Sircar during his three-day visit here also distributed the warm clothes in one municipality and 23 unions of Atowari, Sadar and Tetulia upazilas.

He also thanked the Dutch-Bangla Bank for allotting 10,000 blankets for the distressed people of the district. Local member of parliament (MP) Mojahar Hossain and MD of the bank Yasin Ali were present.

## Plastic surgery camp begins

**UNB, Faridpur**  
A four-day plastic surgery camp began here Saturday.

Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf was the chief guest in the inaugural function jointly organised by Faridpur General Hospital unit of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) and Faridpur Welfare Foundation.

Led by Spronk, surgery specialist of Holland, local specialist doctors are providing treatment to the patients.

## Rare snake caught from Narsingdi

**UNB, Narsingdi**  
A rare species of snake, 'Balubora' or 'Shishu python', was caught from Char Chindur in Polash upazila here recently.

Sharif Khan, wild animal and bird expert and advisor of Bangladesh Wild Animal Protection Association and Farhad Mahmud, secretary of local Forest Cooperative Association, termed the snake as 'Balubora' or 'Shishu python'.

Scientific name of the snake, which is now under the supervision of Wild Animal expert Sharif Khan, is Exyx Conicus.

Sharif Khan told that rat, bird and other snakes are the main food of this gentle type non-poisonous snake. It generally gives birth to six or seven babies at a time.

Prominent wild animal expert Professor Kazi Zakir Hossain collected a sample of two-foot long dead Balubora from Bhuapur in Tangail in July of 1998.

The Balubora whose length is generally six feet is locally known as Shishu python because of its belongingness to python group.

## Criminal, accomplices arrested

**UNB, Munshiganj**  
A criminal and one of his accomplices were arrested along with arms from Makhati Ninpara Bridge area in Sadar upazila.

Police said acting on secret information they arrested BNP activist Aman Majhi and his accomplice Jewel from the area. Majhi, a notorious criminal was wanted in two murder cases, they added.

Later a cut rifle was recovered on the basis of the confessional statement of Aman.

## 250 rounded up

**UNB, Pabna**  
The army-led joint force, in its ongoing anti-crime operation, arrested 250 people including 32 listed criminals from different parts of the district in last 70 days till Friday.

During the period, they also recovered 41 arms and 1,014 ammunition, which were exhibited for the public in the open place adjacent to the stadium on Saturday.

## Cold wave, diarrhoea death toll 40 in northern region

**BSS, Joypurhat**

Severe cold wave from the northern Himalayan areas is still continuing in the northern districts since December 18.

The unofficial death toll from cold wave and diarrhoea rose to 40 in the region during the last one fortnight.

The special allocation of 5,000 blankets arrived in 10 worst-affected northern districts from the Prime Minister's (PM) Relief Fund on Friday. The blankets will be distributed soon among the cold-affected

people in the region.

According to official sources, 500 pieces of blankets have been sent by the Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation for the districts of Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Nilphamari, Kurigram, Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha, Joypurhat and Bogra as per a directive from the PM's office.

Though there is weak sunshine in the afternoon at almost all places, thick fog covers the whole area from evening till noon every day.

Normal life remains almost paralysed everywhere and the sufferings of cold-affected people are mounting fast for want of warm clothes. Hundreds of people are being attacked by cold-related diseases for extreme cold and lack of awareness of common people.

Viral diseases may attack the growing boro seedbeds, potato and other crops if this situation continues, Department of Agriculture (DAE) officials feared.

## UP election dates for Narail, Gopalganj announced

## Six lakh likely to exercise voting rights in Gopalganj

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj**

The dates of union parishad (UP) elections in 63, out of 68 unions in five upazilas of Gopalganj district have been announced by the district election office.

About six lakh voters are likely to exercise their rights to vote in the coming union parishad (UP) elections.

The schedule of elections for five upazilas are given below.

Elections to Shauagram, Kandi, Pinguri, Hiron and Kushla union parishads in Kotlipara upazila will be held on January 25 in 2003 while elections to Amtali, Bandabari, Ramshil, Jagan and Kalabari UPs in the same upazila will be held on January 28 in 2003.

Elections to Patgati, Kausli, Borni, Dumuria and Gopalpur Ups in Tungipara upazila will be held on February 2 next year.

Elections to Borashi, Kathi, Kazulia and Ragnunathpur Ups in Gopalganj Sadar upazila will be held on February 5, 2003 while elections to Durgapur, Maghigathi, Urfee, Latifpur and Hariduspur Ups will be held on February 16 next year. Elections to Satur, Shahapur, Nizra, Bhaltali, Ulpur and Korpara UPs will be held on February 19, 20

03 and polls at Chaudratagulia, Gopannathpur, Paikkandi, and Suktail UPs in Gopalganj Sadar upazila will be held on February 23 next year.

In Kasiani upazila elections to Fukra, Orakaudhi, Mahamudpur, Razzat, Bathuria UPs will be held on February 27 while polls will be held at Singa, Hatiara, Puishoor and Nizamkandi UPs held on March 2 '03. Elections to Mahayspur, Parulia, Sazali, Ratil and Kasiani UPs in Kasiani upazila will be held on March 5, 03.

In Mukshudpur upazila elections to Galirpur, Nonikhari, Rakhdhi, Dignagar and Batkamari UPs will be held on March 9, 03. UP polls will be held at Basbaria, Musna, Maharipur, Kasulia, and Uzani unions on March 12, 03. Elections to Pashargati, Bhawhogram, Khanderpur, Gobindapur and Bhadrashur UPs in Mukshudpur upazila will be held on March 16, 03.

Elections to Gobra and Jalallabad union parishads (UPs) in Gopalganj Sadar upazila and Gohala in Mukshudpur upazila, Radhaganj and Shahdullapur in Kotailpara upazila will not be held due to non-expiry of period and pending cases in courts.

**Our Narail Correspondent**

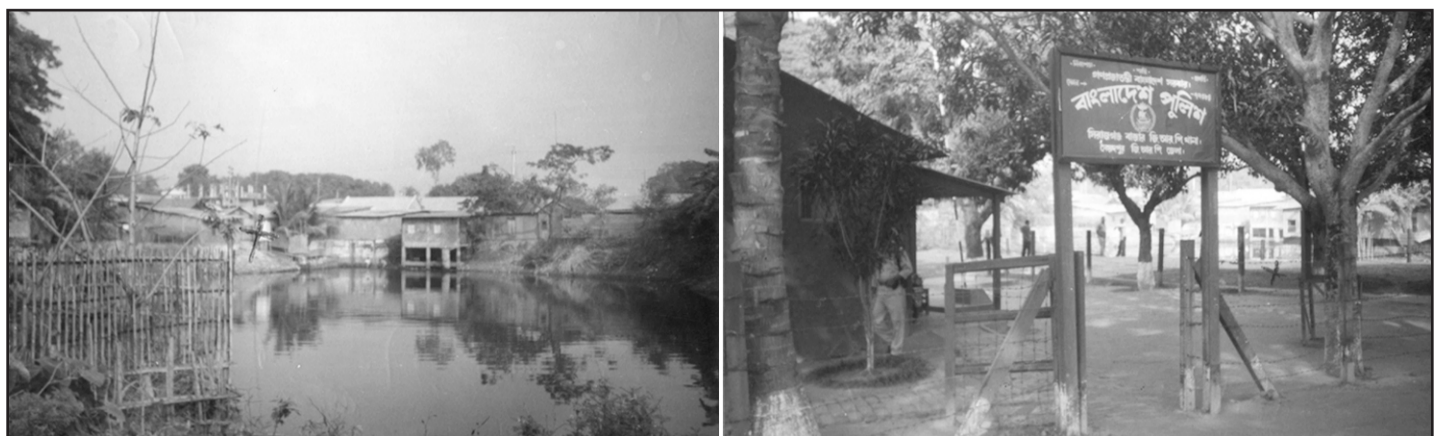
**reports:** The district election office has declared Union Parishad (UP) election dates for 38 UPs in Narail district.

Election to three upazilas will be held between January 25 and February 18, 2003.

It was decided at a meeting at the Deputy Commissioner's (DCs) conference room on December 14. Election to Babra-Kalabaria, Baronal, Salamabad and Hanidpur UPs and Gohar Danga, Basisona, Joynagar and Khashial UPs will be held on February 1, 2003 while UP polls will be held at Naldi, Lahuria, Salnagar, Noagram UPs on February 3, 2003. Election to Itna, Dighalia, Kotakhil, Mauli UPs will be held on February 6, 2003. UP polls will be held at Lakshmpasha, Kashiipur, Mallikpur, Lohagara and Joypur unions on February 9, 2003. Election to Peroli, Bichali, Sk Hatti, Kalora and Singasolpur UPs will be held on February 12, 2003.

UP polls will be held at Mulia, Tularampur, Sahabad, Hobokhali and Maizpara unions on February 15. Elections to Chandibarpur, Vadrabla, Auria and Bashgram UPs will be held on February 18, 2003.

Submission of nomination papers has already been started in all the three upazilas.



(Left) A pond adjacent to Sirajganj Government Railway Police Station is used for washing raw hide resulting in environmental pollution to the surrounding residential area while (right) some raw hide warehouses are seen through the aforementioned police station.

## Raw hide warehouses polluting environment in Sirajganj town

**AKHTERUZZAMAN BABLU, Sirajganj**

The workers of Bastuhara Samity, Sirajganj recently paraded the streets of the district town demanding shifting of raw hide 'godowns' (warehouses) from the residential area here.

Following the procession a meeting was held at the Sirajganj Bazaar Station where the speakers demanded immediate shifting of the hide trade and processing centre from the place and rehabilitation of landless people.

Growth of many unauthorised warehouses of raw hide in the centre of Sirajganj town has created serious health hazard for the dwellers of the nearby residential area.

Unscrupulous people built illegal hide warehouses on the deserted railway land near the Sirajganj Bazaar Station. Gradually the area was termed as the hide processing and trade centre by the unscrupulous people. Ultimately they grabbed about 200 acres of land of the Railway Department. As a result the Railway personnel find it very difficult to clean wagons and turn railway engines due to shortage of space. They also stole railway slippers, line sheet and other railway property.

Raw hides are being brought here from other upazilas regularly. The hides are being processed with salt and other chemicals following wash in the pond near the police station.

Local people and on-duty police personnel have complained of very bad smell and menace of flies (insect) due to this phenomenon.

Moreover, students walk through this area regularly because of existence of Railway High School and Qaumi Madrassah. Besides, people of Raipur, Char Raipur, Mirpur, Kalia Haripur and Jhaoil areas use a road near the raw hide warehouses every day. People residing nearby are being attacked with intestinal disease and other diseases.

Waste of processed hides are being dumped in the Katakhal canal which is the only outlet of garbage of the town. As a consequence the entire area is being polluted threatening public health. Katakhal canal and the pond where hides are being processed regularly have become an ideal breeding ground of mosquitoes.

Affected people including the students of nearby institutions have demanded of the authorities concerned to shift the warehouses to the Old Kandapara area immediately.

It is to be mentioned that the hide

## Three illegal toll collectors convicted

**UNB, Pabna**

Speedy Trial Tribunal convicted three people and sentenced them to four years rigorous imprisonment (RI) for demanding tolls from a wedding ceremony.

The tribunal also fined them Tk 4,000 each.

According to the case, in brief, Babu, Mintu and Monwar Hossain demanded Tk 50,000 from a post wedding ceremony and ransacked the function when the party denied to pay the money at Shalgaria in the town on September 11.

First Class Magistrate Anam Al Firoz after examining the witnesses and records awarded the punishment.

## 2 abducted boys rescued in critical condition

**UNB, Munshiganj**

Two boys abducted from Purbopara Chantara mosque area in Sadar upazila Friday were rescued in critical condition from village Noygaon of the upazila the same day.

Family sources said the activists of a miscreant group, 'Iman Bahini', picked up Jony, 14, and Sharif, 15, from the area at gunpoint and took them to their village.

They demanded Tk 10,000 as ransom from their families and tortured the boys mercilessly.

Later police rescued the critically injured boys in an unconscious state and arrested Sajjad.



A villager washes his cow in a water body near the damaged Sonail embankment at Goderhat in Sadar upazila in Gaibandha. Over 1000 feet of the dam washed away during the last flood.

## Mymensingh area commander in Netrakona

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona**

Major General Moin U Ahamed, GOC of 19 Infantry Division and commander of Mymensingh area asked the members of the Joint Forces to do their duties sincerely.

He was addressing the forces at Kendua Upazila Parishad camp in Netrakona in the evening on December 26.

He also addressed them at the BADC ground in the district town. Brigade Commander of 77 Infantry Brigade Brigadier General Mojaffar Ahmed (Bir Bikram) and Commander of 6 East Bengal Regiment were also present.

## Poor prices of newly harvested onions frustrate growers

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur**

Newly harvested onions have flooded all the hats and bazaars across the district.

Onions are on sale at Tk 5-6 a kg in different markets of the town.

"The selling prices of harvested onions do not cover the production cost" one farmer said adding that he would incur a huge loss on onion farming involving nearly 20 decimals of land.

Quality onions locally called "Murikata piaj" have been produced well especially in Sadarpur, Char

Bhadrasan Nagarkanda and Sadar upazila of the district this year.

According to the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), a total of 16,000 hectares of land have been brought under onion cultivation with a production target of 16,000 metric tons.

However, "Hali piaj" will be harvested in the month of March or April. One farmer told that the prices of this type of onion must increase as many of the farmers could not cultivate "Hali piaj" owing to acute scarcity of onion seeds in the district during seed-sowing season.



A boatman ferrying people across the Nabaganga River at Parnanduali in Sadar upazila, Magura. At the advent of the winter the Nabaganga lost navigability at many places due to silt build-ups.