

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Cop suspended

A CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

A police official was suspended on Thursday night on charge of harassing several people and taking money from them in the city. Accused Akbor Hossain, sub-inspector of Khulna Kotwali Police Station, was then closed to the metropolitan police lines. Police said the victims got intimidated by the SI as he often took money from them in the name of drug peddling and other charges.

Abducted UP member rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bogra*

A union parishad (UP) member was rescued three hours into his abduction on Wednesday. The victim, Abu Bakker, 43, is member of Chandanbaisha Union Parishad in Sariakandi upazila of the district. Police also arrested four people--Zakirul Islam Murad, 20, Tutul Mondal, 18, Atiqur Rahman Rikat, 20, and Nurul Islam Bipul, 18 from the area in connection with the abduction. Police said Bakker went to the court of executive magistrate at noon. When he came out of the court, two youths on a motorbike kidnapped him and took him to a lonely place near Shah Sultan College and demanded Tk 50,000 ransom from his family. The wife of the victim informed the police of the matter. Later, police rescued the UP member and arrested the alleged kidnappers. Inspector (Investigation) of Sadar Police Station Riaz Ahmed said that the victim had a feud with the kidnappers over money matters. The arrestees were released later after a written statement on mutual understanding signed by both the sides, the inspector. The inspector added.

Free Friday clinic

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Faridpur*

A 'free Friday clinic' was launched with a view to providing free medical treatment to the poor here on Friday. The clinic started its journey at the residence of Mohammad Shamsul Haque Bhola Master, chairman of Sadar upazila parishad, in the town. More than 30 patients received treatment and necessary medicines after the clinic's inauguration. Eminent social worker Prof Abdus Samad, Prof MA Halim, principal of Faridpur Mahabidyalay and Rotarian Dr Jalaluddin Ahmed, among others, spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Students and teachers of Bikramhati Maj Gen Mahmudul Hasan High School accompanied by locals bring out a procession on Dhaka-Tangail highway in Tangail district yesterday demanding severest punishment to the criminals who gang-raped a schoolgirl, keeping her confined to a house in Modhupur upazila under the district for four days from December 6 last year.

Dialogue on water logging

A CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

A divisional dialogue title "Water logging in South-western region, want short and long term planning" was held at a hotel in the city yesterday. Eight organizations-Humanitywatch, Progoti, Coastal Livelihood Ecology and Adaptation Network (CLEAN), Coastal Development Partnership (CDP), Nagorik Sanghati, Participatory Research and Action Network (PRAN), Prantojon Trust and Samaj Progoti Sangstha (SPS)-jointly organised the programme with the support from National Alliance for Risk Reduction and Response Initiative (NARRI) and UKaid. The speakers said implementation of Tidal River Management (TRM) can protect water logging in the south-western region. Prof Anwarul Kadir, director of Sundarbans Academy, presided over the programme.

Robbers loot house

UNB, *Chittagong*

Robbers looted gold ornaments, cash and other valuables worth Tk 12 lakh from a house at Paschim Sarafbhata village in Rangunia upazila early yesterday. Police said a gang of 15/20 entered the house of a Bahrain expatriate Kamal Uddin by cutting the grill of the window at about 1:00am and took away 24 tolas of gold ornaments and Tk 1.50 lakh at gunpoint.

4 Jamaat-Shibir men held

UNB, *Benapole, Jessore*

Police arrested four activists of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir in Palbari area of the district town on Friday night. The arrestees are Fasiar Rahman, son of Ahmed Ali Molla, and Abul Kalam Azad, son of Abdul Wahid of Palbari area; Rajibul Haque, son of Mashiul Azam of Kadamtala area of Sadar upazila, and Mizanur Rahman, son of Habibur Rahman of Ghoshpara area of Puratan Kosba. Wahiduzzaman, sub-inspector of Jessore Kotwali Police Station, said on secret information, a team raided the area and arrested them on charge of planning subversive activities.

Two found dead on rail track

UNB, *Feni*

Two unidentified people, including a boy, were found dead on rail track near Feni railway station here on Friday. Railway police sources said on informed, they went to the spot and found bodies of the duo, one aged around 45 and another 10, lying in the area. Police said they might have been killed after being hit by Chandpur-bound 'Meghna Express' from Chittagong. Mezba-ul-Alam, sub-inspector of Government Railway Police, said they could not ascertain whether the deceased were pedestrians or passengers of the train.

Dinajpur 'mine blast tragedy day' today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Today, January 6 is the reminder of Dinajpur mine blast tragedy.

On this day in 1972, several hundred freedom fighters were killed in a series of explosions that followed an accidental mine blast at the transit camp of freedom fighters on at Maharaja Girizananth High School in the town.

After the December 16 final victory against the Pakistan occupation army, around 800 freedom fighters belonging to erstwhile Sectors 6 and 7 were brought to the transit camp set up at the school ground, said witnesses and survivors of the tragedy.

The freedom fighters under the supervision of the camp in-charge started searching out land mines and other explosives earlier planted by Pakistani forces at different places of Dinajpur and surrounding districts.

The recovered explosives including mines, anti-tank mines, jumping mines and mortars shells were piled up at the school ground.

On January 6, 1972, the freedom fighters were unloading explosives from two trucks when acciden-



PHOTO: STAR

A large number of freedom fighters, who met tragic death due to a series of accidental mine blasts at Moharaja Girijanath High School ground in Dinajpur town on January 6 in 1972, were buried at Chehelgazi under the municipality.

tally a landmine exploded, and it led to a series of explosions, killing a large number of freedom fighters, witnesses said.

Scattered limbs of human bodies and debris from the buildings destroyed in the explosions spread in all directions, creating horrible scene.

The accident killed around 200 people on the spot, said freedom fighter and former mayor of Dinajpur municipality Md

Shafiqul Haque, also an eyewitness to the incident.

After the series blast, locals rescued hundreds of wounded freedom fighters but most of them could not be saved due to lack of treatment facilities in the war-ravaged country.

Forty 40 years after the tragedy, the exact number of the victims could not be known due lack of proper initiatives.

Over a hundred freedom fighters were buried at

Chehelgazi under Dinajpur Sadar upazila with state honour while bodies of many others were taken by the family members.

A large number of pieces of limbs of the killed people were also buried at the same place.

Through their own initiative, Sixth January Smriti Parishad (memorial committee) of Dinajpur built a monument with a list of 238 martyred freedom fighters at the school ground.

BSF picks up one from Thakurgaon

Returns bodies of two others in Chapainawabganj

STAR NATIONAL DESK

A Bangladeshi citizen was picked up by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) in Thakurgaon on Friday while the bodies of two others, who were shot dead by BSF in Chapainawanganj district on Wednesday, were handed over to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) yesterday. BSF men picked up a youth on Nagorvita border in Baliadangi upazila of Thakurgaon on Friday night, reports our correspondent.

The victim was identified as Moshir Rahman, 28, son of Yasin Ali of Badambari Sarcarpura village.

Lt. Colonel Touhidul Islam, commanding officer of BGB 30, said the BSF members of Chaklaganj camp picked up Moshir at about 8:30pm while he entered a few yards inside the Indian territory to bring cattle.

After the incident Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) asked its Indian counterpart for holding a flag meeting to return him.

Later, a company commander level flag meeting of BSF and BGB was held over the issue.

At the meeting, BSF said they handed Moshir over to Indian police on charge of intrusion, added operation officer MJ Kazi Alamgir of BGB.

In Chapainawabganj, Indian BSF yesterday returned the bodies of two cattle traders following a company commander level flag meeting with BGB, reports our correspondent.

Subedar Abdul Halim, company commander of Rokonpur BGB camp, said the meeting was held on Bibhison border in Gomostapur upazila at around 4:30pm.

The deceased were identified as Mohammad Masud, 23, son of Afsar Uddin of Bhibhison village in Gomostapur upazila and Shahidul Islam, 28, son of Golam Mostofa of Tarapur-Shahapara village in Shibganj upazila.

On Wednesday, the two were killed as a patrol team of BSF of Bibhison border of Gomostapur upazila opened fire on them when they were returning home through the border.

The bodies were later handed over to the family members, said the subedar.

Youth commits 'suicide'

UNB, *Benapole, Jessore*

A young man allegedly committed suicide in Sadar upazila on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Shahinur Rahman, 25, son of Shahar Ali of Sirumpur village.

Family sources said Shahinur had been suffering from abdominal pain for long.

Failing to bear the acute pain, he took his life by hanging himself from the ceiling of his room.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Shops, school gutted

UNB, *Khagrachhari*

At least 25 shops, five houses and rooms of a school were gutted in a devastating fire at Pujgang Bazar in Panchhari upazila on Thursday night.

Witnesses said the fire originated from a cooking stove at a tea shop in the area at about 10:00pm and soon engulfed the adjacent shops, five dwellings and rooms of 'Bonasree Shishu Niketan,' a kindergarten school.

On information, a fire fighting unit from the district town rushed in and doused the blaze after two hours of frantic efforts.

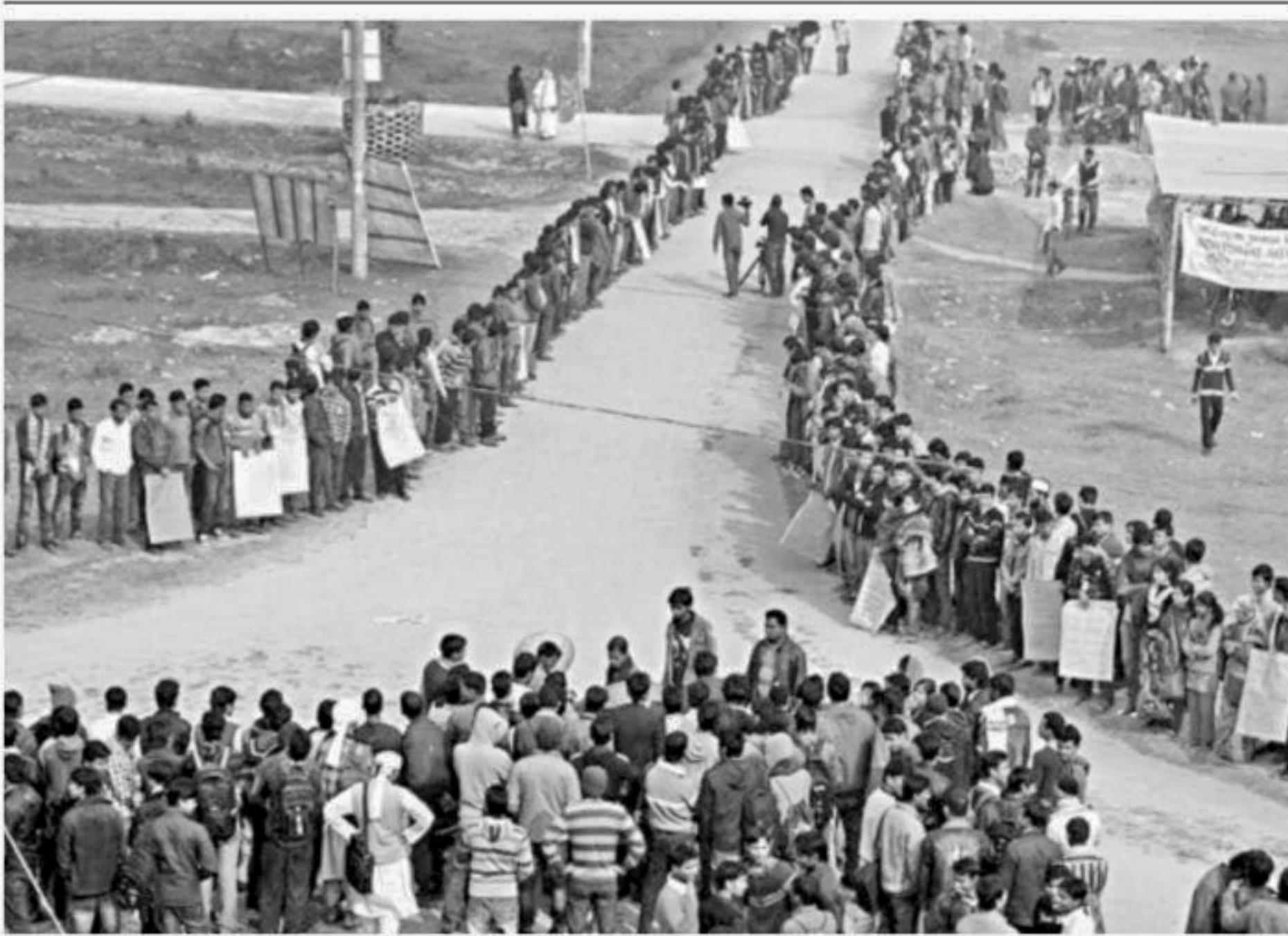


PHOTO: STAR

Students of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur form a human chain on the campus yesterday demanding steps to open their dormitories, make the university library functional, set up a permanent hospital, and arrange more buses for students' transport.

Smugglers clash with BGB men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Benapole*

Two members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) were injured and two smugglers received bullet injuries during a clash between BGB men and smugglers at Harikhali in Sharsa upazila of Jessore district at midnight on Friday.

Major Firoj Wahid of 26 BGB said when a special BGB team from Benapole raided a drive in Harikhali area on Navaron-Satkhira Road to seize smuggled goods, a gang of smugglers swooped on the border guards, leaving Lance Nayek Arif Hossain and Nayek Sirajul Islam injured.

Two smugglers, Ajgor Ali, 45, and Salim Hossain, 35, received bullet injuries as BGB men opened fire on the gang.

They (BGB personnel) arrested the two and sent them to Jessore Sadar hospital while the remaining gang

members managed to flee.

The BGB men seized 700-kg of cumin, 93 bottles of phensidyl, and 40 Indian sarees from the spot. A case was filed with Sharsa Police Station.

Meanwhile, three alleged smugglers sustained bullet injuries as they locked in a clash with BGB member near Hatkhola border in Panchbibi upazila of Jaypurhat on January 1.

Lt Colonel Khasru Sabbir, commander of Jaypurhat-3 BGB, told our Dinajpur correspondent that a gang of around 150 smugglers swooped on a BGB patrol team at around 5:30am as the border guards obstructed them from bringing Indian cattle to the country.

At a stage, the BGB members fired 12 gunshots, leaving the three smugglers injured. The BGB team seized five cattle from the spot.

BCL foils BNP meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrakona*

At least 10 people, including ATN Bangla cameramen Sujon Chowdhury, were injured as BCL men attacked a BNP meeting at Ayesha Community Centre in the town yesterday.

They also vandalised the community centre, set several motorbikes and the centre afire.

Locals said a group of BCL men, equipped with sharp

weapons attacked the BNP leaders and activists while they were holding a meeting at the centre in Nagra area of the town at around 2:00pm.

Later, the BCL men vandalised district BNP office at Chutabazar and set fire to it.

A tense situation is prevailing in the town. Police have been deployed in different areas of the district headquarters to avert any untoward incident.



PHOTO: STAR

Residents of Char Commissioner and Kazirchar unions in Muladi upazila under Barisal district can now walk across this channel of Arial Kha River, thanks to their voluntary labour of love that made it possible to construct the 700-yard-long bamboo bridge.

700-yard-long bamboo bridge built on self-help basis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Local people have constructed a 700-yard-long bamboo bridge on a channel of Arial Kha River, facilitating movement of a few thousand residents including several hundred students of three schools in Char Commissioner and Kazir Char unions in Muladi upazila under the district.

Starting the work in early November, they completed it two weeks ago, and Tk 10 lakh was spent to make the bridge with 8000 bamboos.

Locals led by Abdus Sattar, Rashid, Rob Kha and

Anis Haoladar took the initiative to construct the bridge to mitigate sufferings of thousands of people, said Shahjahan Tafadar, chairman of Char Commissioner union parishad.

"Many people could not afford the costly boat journey on the river channel that sees 4-6 feet water depth in the rainy season. The depth comes down to only 2-3 feet in the dry season, making the movement of boats difficult," he said.

"The bridge will greatly benefit students of Shayestabad Shafiuddin High School, Kazirchar

Peada Hut Wahadia High School and Katherpool Registered Primary School. Locals requiring journey to the upazila, district and divisional headquarters will be benefited too," said Abus Sattar.

"As the local union parishad and the government authorities failed to provide fund for construction of a concrete bridge, and we took initiative to set the bamboo bridge, perhaps the longest one of its kind in the country. We the locals contributed money and voluntary labour for the purpose," he added.

40 hurt as villagers clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *B'baria*

At least 40 people, including three policemen and a journalist, were injured during a clash between two groups of villagers in Ashuganj upazila of the district yesterday morning.

According to police and witnesses, locals arranged a cricket match at a field at Tolla village where two teams-one from Tarua village and another from Tolla village participated.

Police quoted witnesses as saying that the trouble began at around 11:00am when the two teams locked in an altercation over a wide ball.

At one stage, people of the two villages swooped on each other, they added.

The clashing groups used bamboo sticks, iron rods and hurled bricks chips at each other during the clash that continued for an hour.

Being informed, law enforcers from Ashuganj Police Station rushed to the spot, dispersed the feuding groups and brought the situation under control.

At least 40 people, including three police and a reporter of Banglanews24.com, were injured. The reporter, Md Ishaque Sumon, received head injuries while he was taking photos.

Sumon was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital while the cops given first aid at Ahuganj health complex.

The rest of the injured were admitted to Ashuganj upazila Health Complex and Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital.