



**JOY OF HAVING NEW BOOKS IN NEW YEAR:** From left, kids belonging to an ethnic community rejoice after getting new books at their school in Parkul Tea Garden area of Chunarughat upazila of Habiganj, students of Pabna Zila School pose with their teachers, and a few students of Barpara Government Primary School in Khagrachhari district town get immersed in reading their new textbooks as schoolchildren across the country got the government sponsored books on the New Year yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Padma water level measurement starts

**2 Indian experts arrive to join Bangladesh team for the work**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Monitoring of water level at different points of the Ganges and Padma, the two major rivers of the neighbouring countries, was started yesterday by India and Bangladesh jointly under the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty 1996.

Water Development Board (WDB) sources said the flow of water in the mighty Padma is much better than that of the previous years.

A two-member Bangladeshi team headed by Pabna WDB Executive Engineer KM Johurul Haque started recording of water level at Hardinge

Bridge point, about 2500 feet upstream of the Padma river, yesterday morning.

A

two-member Indian delegation

led by Ananda Prakash Kandiyal, deputy director of Indian Centre Water Commission (CWC) and Shivram, a member of CWC, are also likely to join the joint monitoring team in Pabna today.

Due to the country's general election, the Indian experts came to Bangladesh today [Tuesday] and will start their observation from tomorrow [Wednesday], Johurul said.

Although the Indian experts could not reach there in scheduled time, they started the recording on their own yesterday, he said.

The flow of water in Padma at Hardinge Bridge point is between 80,000 to 90,000 cusec at this moment, which was between 65,000 to 70,000 cusec last year, Johurul added.

The team of the joint experts will record water level of a 10-day cycle at Hardinge Bridge point and file their reports, the WDB engineer said.

According to the treaty, two joint experts committees, one in India and one in Bangladesh, record the water level for five months from January 1 to May 31 every year.

## Ushatan Talukder rejects JS polls result in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Independent candidate Ushatan Talukder has rejected the result of the constituency comprising Rangamati in the eleventh parliamentary elections.

Speaking at a press conference at Sabarang Restaurant in the hill town yesterday, he also demanded the release of Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) leaders and activists who were arrested by law enforcers before and during election.

Ushatan alleged that Awami League (AL) men carried out rigging and occupation of the centres, and his polling agents were not allowed to enter the centres. He also said the ruling party snatched his certain victory through vote robbery.

Ushatan said 17 polling centres in Longadu upazila, 17 in Baghaichari upazila, six in Kaptai upazila, 13 in Kawkhali upazila, two in Naniarchar upazila, two in Bilichari upazila and one in Rajostoli upazila were occupied by AL men.

"The returning officer and assistant returning officer took no action even though a written complaint about the irregularities and fraud was submitted to them. AL men captured ballot boxes and cast fake votes in different polling centres," Ushatan said.

"Bilaichari Upazila Election Managing Committee Convenor Bir Uttam Tanchanga was detained by members of the security forces. Such an election cannot be acceptable," he said.

"Members of security forces carried out extensive searches on many houses in different villages of ten upazilas. As a result, fear and insecurity prevailed among the voters of the area," Ushatan added.

Several leaders of PCJSS and of Parbatya Chattogram Mahila Samiti were present at the press conference.

## Criminals cut 5000 saplings of nursery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Some people chopped off over 5,000 saplings of different kinds of plants at Purbo Shibram village in Sundarganj upazila late at night on Monday as a sequel of a previous feud.

Gopal Chandra, owner of Bashanti Nursery, said the perpetrators cut off 5,000 saplings of different kinds of plants that were ready for sale. He said he sustained a loss of approximately Tk 75,000.

The owner blamed the group with whom he had a feud over construction of a road nearby.

When Gopal went to the nursery yesterday morning, he found that saplings of Thai guava, lemon, pata bahar, segun and mahogany had been cut off.

He filed an FIR with Sundarganj Police Station in this regard.

Officer-in-Charge of the police station SM Abdus Sobhan said the matter is being investigated and legal measures will be taken against the perpetrators.

## MP aspirant lands in jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Arrested independent candidate Syed Shafiqul Islam Minto was sent to jail yesterday.

He took part in the 11th parliamentary election from Mymensingh-6 (Phulbaria) constituency.

Minto was produced before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Mymensingh with a five-day remand prayer but no hearing was held and the court sent him to jail, said Sheikh Kabirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Phulbaria Police Station.

On Monday, detectives arrested Minto from the city for his alleged involvement in snatching away a pistol from an on-duty policeman and assaulting him at Telegram Government Primary School polling centre in Phulbaria on Sunday morning.

Later, Assistant Sub-Inspector Jahangir filed a case, accusing some 40 unnamed and 19 named people, including Minto.

## 86 MP aspirants lose deposit in 5 dists

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Eighty-six MP candidates in 21 constituencies of five districts lost their security deposit in the just concluded general elections for failing to get one-eighth of the cast votes as per the Election Commission law.

Our Dinajpur correspondent reported that, except five Jatiya Oikyafront candidates, all the 22 MP candidates from other political parties in six Dinajpur constituencies lost their security money in the eleventh national elections.

However, there was no candidate from Oikyafront in Dinajpur-3 constituency.

A total of 33 contenders took part in the electoral race in six seats of Dinajpur and all were bagged by the ruling Awami League (AL) candidates.

According to district election office, a total of 10,18,850 voters out 22,06,440 in six constituencies cast their votes in favour of AL candidates.

Meanwhile, the 22 candidates, who are going to lose their security deposit, bagged a total of 24,365 votes in those constituencies.

In Gaibandha, twenty-four out of 30 MP aspirants from four Gaibandha constituencies lost their security deposit as per the Election Commission Law.

Of the 24, two candidates are from Jatiya Party (JP), two from CPB, one each from BNP and BGD and four independent aspirants.

District Election Officer Mahabuber Rahman said the Election Commission received Tk 20,000 as security money from each MP aspirant and will return the deposit money if the candidates can secure one

eighth of the total cast votes.

Away in Lalmonirhat, eleven out of 16 MP candidates in three constituencies of the district lost their deposit money for failing to get one-eighth of the cast votes.

Of them, six candidates are from Lalmonirhat-1 constituency (Hatibandha and Patgram upazilas), three from Lalmonirhat-2 (Kaliganj and Aditmari upazilas) and two from Lalmonirhat-3 (Sadar upazila) constituency.

Our Pabna correspondent adds: As many as 19 candidates, including three from Oikyafront, out of the total 26 MP candidates in five Pabna constituencies are going to lose their deposit money for not getting one-eighth of the cast votes in the December 30 general elections.

In Pabna-1, out of the eight MP candidates, AL nominee Advocate Shamsul Haque Tuku won the electoral race by bagging 2,81,834 votes, while all his seven other opponents failed to secure one-eighth of the cast votes.

Our Faridpur correspondent reports, as per the Election Commission law, 10 MP aspirants out of 13 from different political parties in three Madaripur constituencies have lost their security money in the 11th JS polls.

Of the 10 candidates, who lost their deposit money, four each contested from Madaripur-1 and Madaripur-2 while two are from Madaripur-3, according to Madaripur Election Office.

## Youth found murdered on Thakurgaon border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A youth was found murdered on the bank of the Nagar river near Dabri border in Haripur upazila of the district yesterday.

The deceased was Nijarul Islam, 25, son of Ali Hossain of Mednisagar village, said Md Amiruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Haripur Police Station, adding that the body bore several injury marks.

Quoting family members, Abdul Hamid, chairman of Gedura Union Parishad, said the victim along with some youths entered Indian territory to bring cattle three days ago.

They were detained by Border Security Force (BSF). However, BSF later freed them, he said.

BSF men might have killed Nijarul and dumped the body in the area as he went to the Indian territory again early yesterday to bring cattle, said the chairman.

Lt Col Tuhin Mohammad Masud, commanding officer (CO) of BGB 50 Battalion, said a company commander level flag meeting between BSF and BGB was held at the zero line on the border. BSF said they were not aware about the killing.

The murder was not similar to BSF killing they usually see. The youth is a victim of internal conflict between the cattle smugglers, said the CO.



Criminals cut around 5000 saplings of this nursery owned by Gopal Chandra at Purbo Shibram village in Sundarganj upazila of Gaibandha on Monday night.

PHOTO: STAR

## 300-year-old relics in ruins

*The complex with 10 houses and temples need urgent repair*

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Once a vast compound with 10 residences and temples, the Duttagpara Zamindar Bari at Banaripara upazila of Barishal is now in a sombre state with bushes covering rickety structures.

The compound used to attract large crowds during Durga Puja and Manasha Puja until the Liberation War, said Dhruba Saha, a descendant of the zamindars who built the compound some 300 years ago.

Dhruba lives at "Boro Bari" inside the compound. His home built on two acres of land by the Sandhya river is about 25km from the district town.

Other residents of Duttagpara village said years of neglect by local authorities had left the site with great archaeological features in ruins.

The descendants were poor and lacked the resources to restore the buildings. The government's intervention

was necessary, they said.

Now only two residential buildings and five temples are left on the premises, all on the verge of collapse, the villagers told this correspondent.

Two zamindars, Bija Ram Saha and Sita Ram Saha, built the complex after arriving there from Jashore, said Dhruba. "They are, in a way, founders of this village because people started living here after the compound was built. It used to turn into a land of merriment during festivals."

But people started leaving following the partition of India in 1947 and then again during the Liberation War in 1971. Eventually the compound turned into a jungle, he added.

SM Iqbal, a writer and former chairman of Banaripara upazila parishad, said if preserved, the Duttagpara Zamindar Bari by the Sandhya river could attract tourists to the district and help flourish

businesses.

If the ancient buildings were not restored immediately the memories of the zamindars would be lost forever, said Nazmul Alam, a local college teacher, calling for immediate steps by the authorities concerned.

Baishari Union Parishad Chairman Mainul Hasan said the government should restore the buildings as they have historical value.

"We can make the call on the higher authorities to preserve the site once we receive a formal application from locals," said Shahin Alam, custodian of Barishal Divisional Museum.

The archaeological department under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs is responsible for conducting surveys on ancient buildings and make recommendations accordingly. No such survey had been done on the Duttagpara Zamindar Bari yet, according to locals.



A once impressive building at Duttagpara Zamindar Bari in Banaripara upazila of Barishal now gives an awfully shabby look, thanks to the negligence of the authorities concerned.

PHOTO: STAR