

Upazila roundup

JAMALPUR

Housewife beaten to death for dowry

From Our Correspondent
March 17: A young housewife was killed by her husband in Babnipur village under Shariabari upazila of the district. The victim Halima Begum (25) was married to Abdul Mazid a few years back on an agreement that a lump sum amount will be paid to Mazid as dowry. He started demanding money from time to time and tortured Halima since after marriage resulting in frequent quarrels. One day when Halima refused to bring money from her poor father she was beaten to death by her husband. A case has been filed with the local police.

KHULNA

Dacoits loot goods worth Tk 70,000

March 17: Armed miscreants looted goods worth about Tk 70,000 from a house of a businessman at Benu Nabu road here, police said today, reports UNB. A group of armed dacoits knocked the door of the house of the businessman Jinnat Ali after dusk recently. When the housewife opened the door the dacoits entered the room, looted gold ornaments and valuables at gun point and decamped with the booties. Criminal activities like robbery, hijack and theft are on rise here in recent days due to inadequate vigilance of law enforcing agencies, local people alleged.

1245 certificate cases filed

Bangladesh Krishi Bank filed 1245 certificate cases against the defaulting farmers to realise outstanding loan of Taka 6.71 crore.

Bank sources said the loans were disbursed through its 19 branches to augment agricultural and fish production of the district.

Of the total loans, about one fourth amount has been lying outstanding with loanees living in the city, the sources added.

It may be mentioned here that out of nine upazilas of the district maximum amount of unrecalled loan has been lying with loanees of Terokheda, Phulitola, Rupsa and Digholia upazilas.

Farmers of these upazilas said they could not repay the loans as they incurred crop loss due to recurrent flooding, draught and other calamities during the last few years.

They urged the authorities to extend time to repay the loans and grant new loans to them to augment agri-production.

NANDAIL

Scarcity of fish

From Our Correspondent

March 17: Acute scarcity of fishes are prevailing at Nandail causing sharp rise in prices. As a result, the poor buyers are unable to purchase fishes to meet the necessity of their families.

It is learnt that most of koi, shing, magur and puti fishes were ruined as 'ulcerative syndrome' has broken out in different canals, beels and ditches of Nandail upazila for the last three months.

No initiative has been taken to combat the situation by local fishery department.

PABNA

Revolver recovered

From Our Correspondent

March 17: Algoria police recovered a country-made revolver and five rounds of ammunition from the house of Ramjan Ali of the village Kumeraser recently.

Acting on a secret information, police raided the house and arrested Mr Year Ali. A case was filed in this connection.

A two-day seminar on mental disease 'depression' was held at Mental Hospital auditorium recently.

Presided over by Dr. Abdus Sobhan, Director of Mental Hospital, Pabna, it was attended by Professor A.K.M. Nazimuddin Chowdhury and other specialists.

Dr. Shah Aminul Islam, Deputy Director of Health of Rajshahi Division was present as the chief guest.

COMILLA

Institute for child, family development inaugurated

From Our Correspondent

March 17: An institute for the child and family development was inaugurated here last Tuesday. Dr. Shamsul Haque, Civil Surgeon, Comilla, was the chief guest in the inaugural function at Diabetic Centre Auditorium where noted physician Dr Zobeida Hannan was in the chair.

The meeting was addressed by Messrs A.K.M. Abdus Salam, M.A. Mabud Chowdhury, M.A. Awal, and Dr Waliullah.

A two-day long workshop on this subject also started after the inaugural function.

The speakers stressed the need for basic primary health education for the mothers, guardians, teachers and students.

They expressed their opinion that for the lack of knowledge about health education the infant mortality is very high in our country. They appealed to the conscious people to participate in the awareness programme taken by this institution.

MADARIPUR

Bamboo prices up

From Our Correspondent

March 17: Bamboo production has been adversely affected due to absence of proper maintenance and plantation resulting in the rise in price in Madaripur and Shariatpur districts.

A sharp rise in price of bamboo in the local markets has been affecting construction work in the town and repair of thatched houses in the rural areas.

At present a standard-size bamboo is being sold at Taka 70 or 80.

Price hike of bamboo is also affecting the people, who depend on cottage industries for their livelihood in the rural areas.

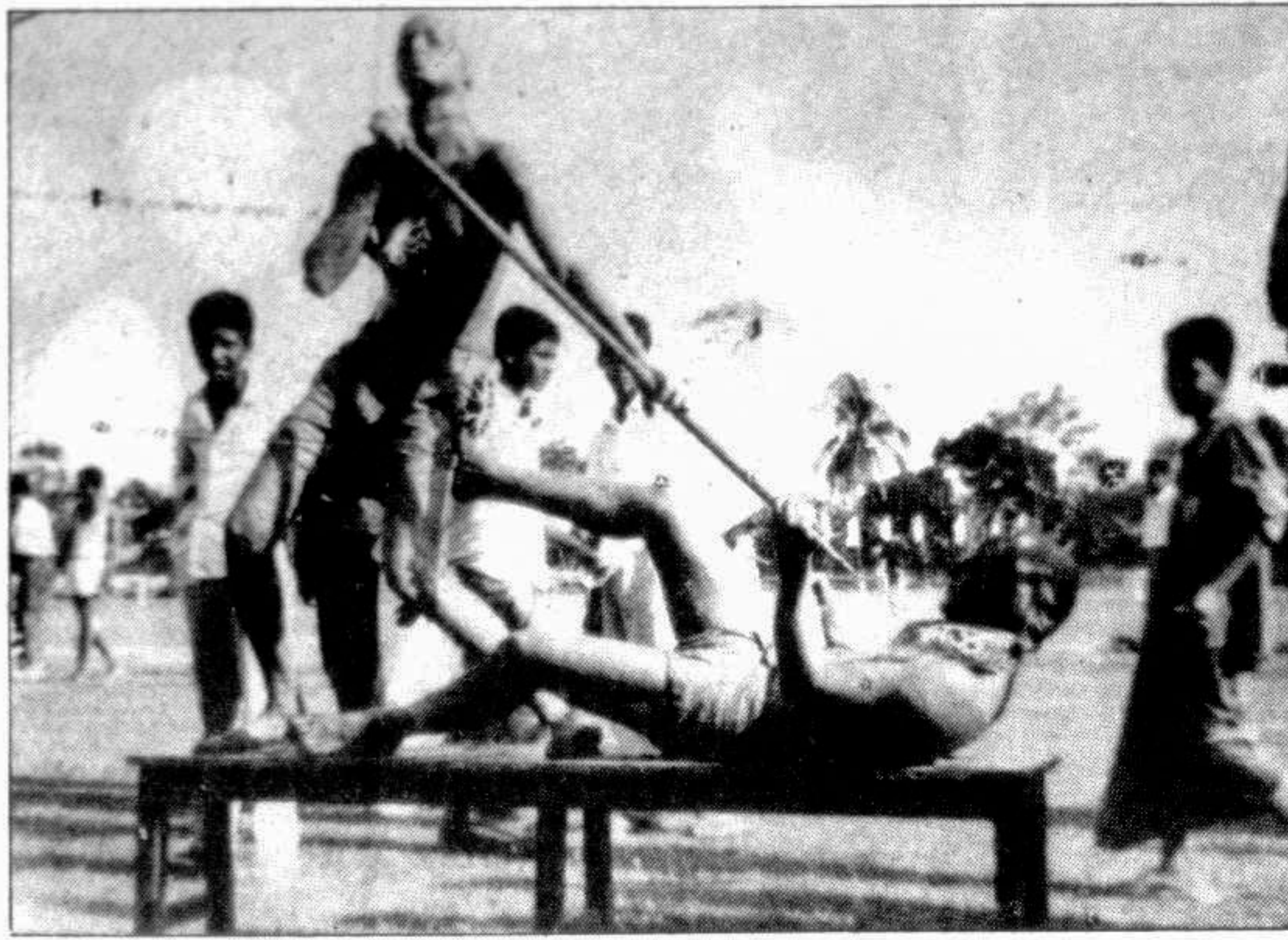
Bamboo is the main raw material for some cottage industry products and various bamboo-crafts are being sold at an exorbitant price these days because of price hike.

Separate ministry for FP demanded

District Family Planning employees brought out a procession in the town Thursday demanding separate ministry for them.

The processionists paraded the main thoroughfares of the town and chanted various slogans in support of their demand. They also submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner of the district.

Later a meeting was held in this connection with the Deputy Director of the district Family Planning in the chair. The speakers said that in the absence of direct ministry family planning programmes failed to achieve desired results in the country.



BARISAL: Two contestants, in 'dress as you like' event symbolising a popular theme 'democracy against autocracy' at the annual athletic meet of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College held recently.

Rajbari-Bhatiapara train communication snapped

FARIDPUR, Mar 17: Thousands of passengers and traders were stranded here as train communication between Rajbari and Bhatiapara was suddenly snapped Tuesday, reports UNB.

The service on the route came to a halt this morning when the local guard samity refused to run any train without a proper guard boggy.

When asked they said, "We were compelled to stop the service as train journey became risky without a proper guard boggy." Higher authorities for last six months had been assuring them to provide guard boggies but none arrived so far, they alleged.

Railway authority of the western zone said, due to shortage of guard boggy the guard boggy could not be attached with the train. They said they were expecting to receive some repaired ones soon.

Bhatiapara is the nearest station from Gopalganj, a busy trading centre in the region.

Pre-polls political commitment stands on way to loan recovery

From Our Correspondent

THAKURGAON, March 17: Non-availability of loan, high price of chemical fertilizers, scarcity of diesel, frequent power failure and non-payment of sugarcane bills to the farmers by the Thakurgaon Sugar Mills Ltd, is hindering cultivation particularly the Irri-Boro in Thakurgaon Sadar, Pirganj, Haripur, Balladangi and Rani-anakail upazilas under Thakurgaon district, it is alleged.

The Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank at Thakurgaon fixed a target of short term loan disbursements including crop production loan, through 12 branches under the Region at Taka two crore 93 lakh during the current fiscal year. But

the bank here could not lend 10 per cent of its target due to shortage of fund, it is learnt. Amount of loan per acre increase high yielding variety has been fixed at Taka 4,675.

Farmers, in this peak time of Irri-Boro cultivation are not getting credit facilities from the bank branches, it is alleged.

When contacted, a bank official told this correspondent, due to pre-election commitment made by the political parties to exempt principal agriculture loan together with interest up to Taka 5,000 and interest upto Taka 10,000, even the willful defaulters are reluctant to repay their

loans. Moreover, the borrowers those who had a credit of over Taka 10 thousands, don't pay the overdues. Rather they replied the bank officials, let us see, what the new government to their pre-election commitment regarding agriculture loans.

"As a result, at present, no recovery is made and the branches are running with fund exhaustion.

Chemical fertilizers are being sold at a high price as there is not fixed retail price, diesel is being sold in the rural markets and upazila headquarters at Taka 18 per litre, which is beyond the purchasing capacity of the users.

Power disruption at every now and then in Thakurgaon has become a regular feature hampering irrigation.

Besides, hundreds of farmers are not getting their dues on account of the prices of their sugarcane that they had supplied to the Thakurgaon Sugar Mills Ltd. The amount of such dues stands at Taka three crore.

Sugar worth about Taka 30 crore are lying unsold which led to the miseries to the farmers.

Farmers urged the authorities concerned to pay their sugarcane price without further delay.

Pilferage of diesel at mid river rampant

From A Correspondent

PABNA, March 17: Pilferage of fuel oil is rampant among the employees of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) on Nagarbari-Aricha route.

It is alleged that some dishonest employees of BIWTA are pilfering a large number of fuel oil barrels and extort ferry passengers who travel without tickets.

According to a report, about 200 coaches and 300 trucks from north and south zones of the country cross the Jamuna river by ferry services daily.

Besides, 10,000 coach passengers and 5000 travellers also avail this ferry service. But only 25 to 30 per cent passengers have valid tickets. Some dishonest persons take illegal gratification from the unauthorised passengers and help them escape.

This illegal activities is helping the unscrupulous staff to earn nearly six lakh Taka per month, causing heavy loss to BIWTA.

Upper class passengers are the most sufferers. The ticketless passengers rush in higher classes depriving bonafide passengers.

Some of them play cards. Frequently they harass female passengers.

Moreover, at least 500 gallons of fuel oil from ferries change hands everyday from the ferries at midstream and are sold in black markets.

According to reliable sources, there is a close contact between the smugglers and the employees of BIWTA.

People urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to stop such illegal activities.

Butchers slaughter sick cattle

MADARIPUR, March 17: Sick cattleheads are being slaughtered indiscriminately in the slaughter house of the municipality here, consumers alleged, reports UNB.

Witnesses said, beefs of sick animals are being sold in local markets at a comparatively lower prices causing serious health hazards.

Mentionable that here are no arrangements in the municipality to examine the animals before slaughtering which is a prerequisite for the safety of the consumers.

Local people have urged the authorities to take action against this malpractice and save the consumers from health hazards.

Ration goods sell at blackmarkets

Rice and wheat sanctioned under Pali Rationing System are being sold in black markets in four upazilas of the district, local people alleged.

Some dishonest dealers of Sadar, Rajoir, Kalkini and Shibchar upazilas are allegedly involved in misappropriation of foodgrains.

The government has fixed the price of rice at Tk 7.34 per kg for sale in the ration shops. But one kg of ration rice is being sold between Taka 10 and 11 in open markets.

Criminal killed

BOGRA, Mar 17: Abdul Khaleque, a notorious criminal, was killed in broad day light on Friday by some miscreants near Fatki bridge, five miles off from the town, police said, reports UNB.

The body was sent to morgue for autopsy and a case was filed with Kotwali police in this connection.

Political scene

Corruption charge against JP leader

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 17: The Kishoreganj unit of Jatiya Party urged the central leaders to take action against Alamgir Hossain, General Secretary of party's district unit for misappropriating 50 tons of wheat and 100 bundles of corrugated iron sheet, reports UNB.

The executive committee of the unit in a meeting held recently also urged to take action against the Secretary for working against JP candidate Abdul Hannan Molla during the last parliamentary elections.

The meeting called on the JP central committee to form a convening committee dissolving the party's existing district committee immediately.

Shahjahan Shiraj, MP-elect from Kalihati on Saturday at Kalihati College play ground.

Mr Shafiqul Islam presided over the meeting. In his speech Mr. Shiraj stressed the need for forming a Juktafront Government to overcome the present political crisis as well as to eliminate the on-going mismanagement in economic sectors.

He said that as the leader of the majority party Begum Khaleca Zila should find out a way to solve the present constitutional crisis so that the earned democracy could be safeguard.

4 AL leaders expelled

PABNA, Mar 17: Four leaders of Iswardi upazila Awami League were expelled from the party in a meeting of the district unit held Friday, reports UNB.

According to a senior member of the district Awami League, the expelled leaders are: Shamsur Rahman Ditu, President of Iswardi upazila Awami League, Salahuddin, Organising Secretary of Iswardi Poursabha, Panna Sarder and Tutul Biswas.

They were expelled for anti-party activities and other serious allegations, party sources said.

12 lose security money

BSS from Thakurgaon adds: Twelve candidates in three constituencies of Thakurgaon district have lost their security money in the recent parliamentary elections.

District election office said, 23 candidates contested the parliamentary polls in three constituencies of the district.

Twelve candidates of different political parties lost their security money.

Siraj accorded reception

BSS from Tangail adds: A reception was accorded to Mr

Govt. urged to send returnees to Kuwait soon

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, March 17: Khondokar Abdul Malik BNP MP-elected from Sylhet in a statement urged the Acting President to make immediate arrangements for sending the Kuwait returnees back to their jobs.

Khondokar who is also the Vice-Chairman of the BNP Central Committee further urged the government to be more active and intensive to provide job opportunities for the people of Bangladesh.

According to the experts, there are over 20,000 returnees in Sylhet alone who have been responsible for a yearly remittance of over Taka 125 crores.

Meanwhile, a joint meeting

of the Makkah-Madina Hafazat Committee and Hotya-Rahajani-Julum-Pratirodh Committee accused the government of demanded doing nothing for rehabilitation of returnees and appropriate steps to rehabilitate the returnees till they could be sent back to their jobs.

Speakers in the meeting regretted that compared to other governments our government had not moved adequately to explore the job avenues while other governments in Asia are fast moving to export manpower to Kuwait. The meeting was presided over by Haji Moulai Hussain of South Surma.

Civic amenities in Narail absent

From Our Correspondent

NARAIL, Mar 17: The residents of Narail Poursabha are deprived of minimum civic facilities.

They are deprived of facilities due to absence of proper drainage system, scarcity of pure drinking water, inadequate street lights, recreational facilities and deplorable condition of roads.

The waste water remains logged in the drains. Besides, the waste water is thrown in the Chhitra river which flows by the side of the town. Most of these drains remain filled with filth, hyacinth and garbage which are cleaned very rarely. As a result there have turned into mosquito breeding centres.

Due to reckless dumping of garbage the environment is getting polluted. On the other hand people of the town are compelled to use this impure river water.

The drinking water pipelines cover only a few miles area of the poursabha and people of other areas are deprived of this facilities. The hand tubewells cannot fulfil the minimum need as most of the tubewells are out of order.

After upgradation to a district the town has been extended. Establishment of various government and non-government offices have taken place but nothing tangible has been done to improve the health and sanitation.

Moreover, the electric lines provided are not sufficient. Most of the electric poles are without bulbs. As a result large areas of the town remain

plunged into darkness.

School building may collapse

The Narail Victoria Collegiate High School named after Queen Victoria is rarely helped by the government since 1978 and is beset with numerous problems.

Immediate demolition of the old dilapidated building is urgently needed as it can collapse at any moment, the school authority is unable to undertake any development.

The institution was set up by an eminent Zamindar of Narail and educationist Barrister Dharendra Ray in 1857 on about seven acres of land donated by the said Zamindar.

One to two students used to secure better places among the 10 every year. The school library has a good number of books on various subjects. Besides the school was also famous for his extra-curricular activities and it has its own play ground.

The glories are now matter of past, results are no more significant. Roofs of the school buildings are in so deplorable condition that it can collapse at any moment. The guardians are concerned about the security of their wards. Without government grant construction of new buildings demolishing the old ones is not possible.

The school is also facing scarcity of furniture, scientific apparatus, sports materials etc. Water supply arrangements, toilets are also not satisfactory.

Service latrines pose health hazards

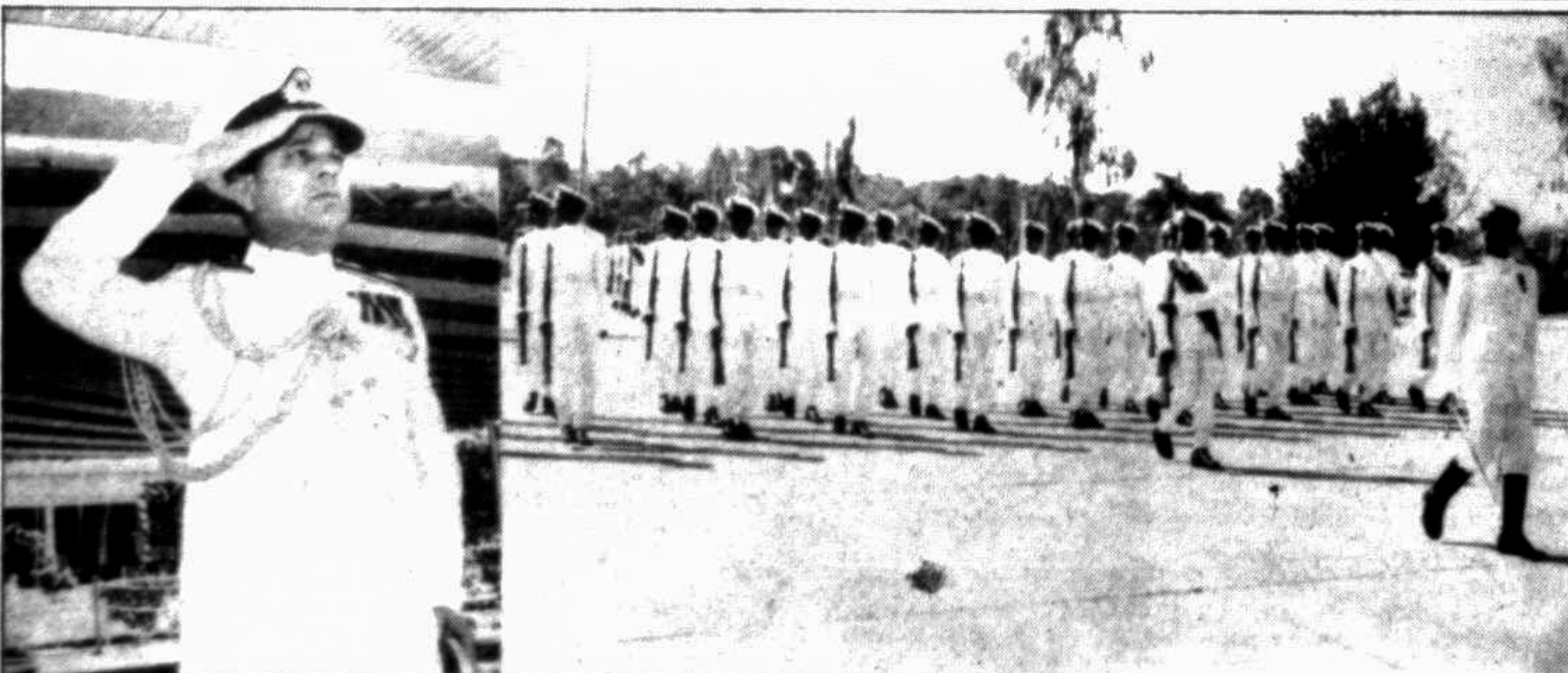
From A Correspondent

CHUADANGA, March 17: Thousands of kutcha and semi-pucca service latrines and accumulated cowdung pose serious health hazards to the towns people.

The inhabitants are suffering from gastro-intestinal, skin, dental and ophthalmic diseases because the beggars and floating people use railway station, bus stand and government building premises as

toilets. Every two days of the week (Saturday and Tuesday) long brick over 'the Mathabanga' remain parked with hundreds of hackneycarts on both sides where a large area become accumulated with horse dung making the place unhygienic.

The pourashava authority appears to be indifferent to the prevailing situation.



Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Amir Ahmed Mustafa taking salute at the passing out parade of a batch of new entry sailors of the Bangladesh Navy at BNS Shaheed Moazzam at Kaptai on Thursday last. —ISPR photo