

Upazila roundup

JHENIDAH

2 smugglers snatched away from custody

Mar 30: Two smugglers were snatched away by their accomplices from the custody of the villagers at Nitya nandapur in Harinakundu upazila Thursday last, reports UNB.

The villagers nabbed the smugglers with two Indian bulls and a shutter gun while they were passing through the village. Later they confined them in a house and informed Harinakundu police.

But before arrival of the police, other smugglers attacked the house blasting hand bombs and snatched away their fellow smugglers.

A case has been recorded with the police.

KUSHIA

Goods, cattle worth Tk 1.40 lakh seized

Mar 30: Anti-smuggling drive in the district has been geared up. BDR and police in separate raids seized goods and cattlehead worth about Taka 1.40 lakh on Wednesday last, reports UNB.

The goods recovered by BDR include Indian sarees, bicycle, spares, insecticide and glass bangles worth about Taka 40,000.

Acting on secret information, Mirpur police raided the Sultanpur and Fulbaria villages and seized 15 Indian Hartana cows worth about Taka 1 lakh.

The contrabands were handed over to the customs officials and separate cases were filed with the police.

In another raid, police also arrested a notorious dacoit Ekenali Mondol (24), and recovered one pipe gun from his possession.

MADARIPUR

2 minor girls drowned

Mar 30: Two minor girls of village Daudkhal in Sadar upazila of the district drowned in the pond adjacent to their house recently, reports UNB.

According to villagers, Sharmin Akhter (3), daughter of Siddiq Howlader and Tanzia (5), daughter of Abdul Kalam had been playing together when slipped into the pond unnoticed by any body.

Their bodies were found floating later.

UNB report adds: Police arrested an absconding accused from Khoagpur village in Sadar upazila of the district recently.

The accused Azizul Haque Howlader was awarded one year's rigorous imprisonment in a criminal case some time past. But he turned fugitive to avoid arrest.

He was sent to Radampur sub jail to serve his term of imprisonment.

FARIDPUR

One killed in road mishap

Mar 30: Upazila Social Service Officer of Char badrasan was killed in a road accident recently, reports BSS.

According to a hospital source, Strajul Islam (45) riding on a motorcycle was knocked down by a passenger bus near Munshirbazar in the suburb of this town on Faridpur-Barisal Highway.

He was shifted to Faridpur General Hospital in a critical condition with serious head injury.

He succumbed to his injury after few hours.

BARISAL

89,000 tons of wheat to be produced

Mar 30: About 89,000 metric tons of wheat is expected to be produced in ten southern districts under Barisal Agriculture Zone (BAZ) in the current season, reports BSS.

The districts are: Barisal, Pirojpur, Jhalakathi, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barguna, Rajbari, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Shariatpur.

According to an official source, wheat was being cultivated in 45,150 hectares in these districts.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has sold 875 tons of wheat seeds to the farmers of these districts in this year, the source said.

Of the total, 500 hectares have been cultivated in Barisal, 50 hectares each in Pirojpur, Jhalakathi and Patuakhali, 2,000 hectares in Bhola, 9,100 hectares in Rajbari, 20,200 hectares in Faridpur, 3,300 hectares in Gopalganj, 3,900 hectares in Madaripur and 6,000 hectares in Shariatpur districts.

SATKHIRA

Five commit suicide

Mar 30: Five people allegedly committed suicide in different parts of the district over the last two days, reports UNB.

The victims identified as Gita Rani (15) wife of Purna Charan Ghosh of Champafal, Hafiza Khatun (22) wife of Ambia Rahman of Kazia, Subhate Rani (23) wife of Bimal Krishna Mandal of Sanatala in Kaliganj upazila, Masuma Rani (21) wife of Siraj of Taltala in Sadar and Shyamali of Kamiratala upazila.

Police said one of the women took poison but the cause of death of the others could not be ascertained. But it is suspected that most of the victims committed suicide due to poverty and pressure for dowry.

JAMALPUR

Property worth Tk 25 lakh gutted in fire incidents

Mar 30: Property worth about Taka 25 lakh was gutted in five separate fire incidents in three upazilas of Jamalpur and Sherpur district recently, reports BSS.

Thirty one houses and cash Taka twenty thousand and agricultural products worth about Taka five lakh were burnt to ashes while fire broke out in the house of Nuru Member at village Derur Beel in Shadpur Para union.

Fire gutted nine houses including essential articles of Yiar Ali in Merur Char union and Property worth about Taka 12 lakh was damaged when fire burnt 11 houses, three cattle head, 500 maunds of potato and 600 maunds of paddy of Ahd Ali at village Gupalpur in Bagar Char union under Dewanganj upazila.

Property worth about Taka four lakh was gutted when fire broke out at village Moamari and Madhyapara in Sananda Bari union under Bakshiganj upazila in Jamalpur district.

Seven houses, cash Taka 3,000 five cattlehead, two goats and other household articles were burnt village Tekker Char in Lasmanpur union under Sadar upazila of Sherpur district recently.

MYMENSINGH

Physician dead

Mar 30: Dr. A. R. Khan, an eminent Physician of Mymensingh town died of cardiac arrest at the Medical College Hospital here Sunday last. He was 71.

Dr. Khan was a former member of the Agricultural University Senate and was also associated with several socio-cultural organisations and Rotary Club.

He was admitted to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital on March 27 morning following his condition deteriorated.

He is survived by three sons, a daughter and his wife, Litteratur Mrs. Helena Khan.

His Namaz-e-Janaza held at the Mymensingh Eidgah Maidan before his body is taken for burial at Tangail graveyard. He hails from Jangalia village of Delduar upazila of Tangail district.

PABNA

Rival groups clash, 10 injured

MUNSHIGANJ, Mar 30: The growers of potato all over the country have to sell over 12 lakh tons of potato at a nominal price due to shortage of requisite cold storages.

The growers in Bangladesh produce 16 to 17 lakh tons of potato every year. A total of 3.25 lakh tons of potato is likely to be produced in Munshiganj alone. The production of potato was fixed earlier at 2.15 lakh tons where the cultivation plan was fixed at 63,226 acres.

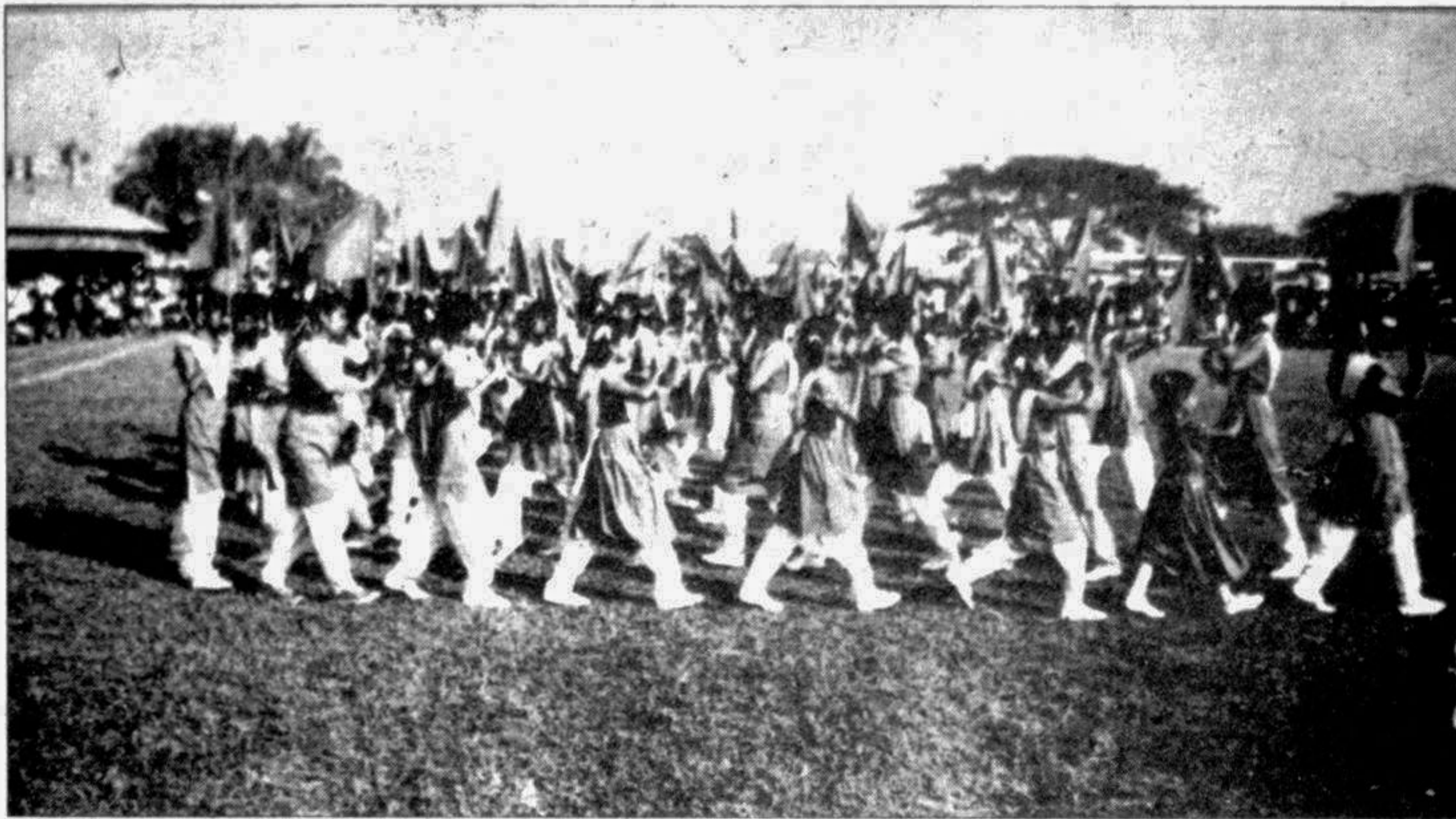
Out of the total potato produced on Munshiganj only, 1.07 lakh tons of potato can be preserved in 39 cold storages of the locality.

It can be mentioned here that there are 168 cold storages in our country where four lakh tons of potato can be preserved. As a result, the growers can not preserve their produce in cold storage. Finding no other alternatives, the growers are to sell their product at a nominal price which sometimes stands below the cost of production.

Some growers expressed that hundreds of tons of potato are perished every year for want of storage facilities. The cultivators of Munshiganj produce 45 per cent of total potato production of the country.

Last year, the growers in Munshiganj produced 7.25 lakh tons of potato which was bumper one. Unfavourable weather was responsible for less amount of production this year. Every year, the growers fall in misery with their bumper production due to shortage of facilities.

After the harvest, the growers are to face competition to store their product as the storage facility is meagre. Exchange of hot words in the campus of cold storages has become a common feature as the facility is limited.



CHANDPUR: A display of the local girls at the stadium on the occasion of Independence and National Day. — Star photo

Independence Day celebrated

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Mar 30: The Independence and National Day was celebrated in the district with renewed pledge to uphold the spirit of Liberation War.

The day's programme began with the hoisting of National Flag atop all public and private buildings. People from all walks of life paid rich tributes to the martyrs of Liberation War by placing floral wreaths at the Angikar (Liberation Monument).

The ceremonial parade and march past were held at the local stadium at about 8 a.m. The police, Ansar VDP, BNCC, Scout Girl Guides, Kachi Kanchar Mela and Khelaghar participated in the march past.

Md. Yakub Ali, Deputy Commissioner, Chandpur took the salute in the march past. Different children organisations took part in displays at the stadium.

A discussion meeting was held at Chandpur Press Club in the afternoon. Sheikh Matur Rahman presided over the meeting which was addressed

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 30: Eight more health complexes will be constructed in the country with the financial assistance of Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) at a cost of Taka 41 crore.

It is learnt that medicines worth Taka 2.50 lakh and cash Taka 30,000 had been supplied to each upazila health complex and health centres at union level during the last financial year. There are 397 health complexes in the country.

It is also learnt that during the last one year 95,845 women were sterilised and a total of Taka 3,97,76,900 had

From Our Correspondent

been spent for the implementation of the project.

According to Health Directorate source, Taka 244.44 crore have been allocated for the hospitals of the country during the current financial year.

An initiative has already been taken by the government to withdraw some specific cases lodged earlier against the surrendered Sarbahara men and other underground party members.

Committees have been formed in the districts headed by the Deputy Commissioners to recommend the cases to the concerned authority. With the

From Our Correspondent

recommendations, the authority will take administrative steps to withdraw the cases.

According to the concerned authority, about 450 members of the underground parties had surrendered with about 300 different types of arms and 500 rounds of ammunition in 10 districts of the region within the stipulated time of the government.

The districts of the region are: Barisal, Jessore, Rajbari, Sariatpur, Magura, Jhenidah, Chuadanga, Narsingdi, Kushtia and Madaripur.

It is learnt that none has been surrendered from Narail, Jhalokathi and Pirojpur districts.

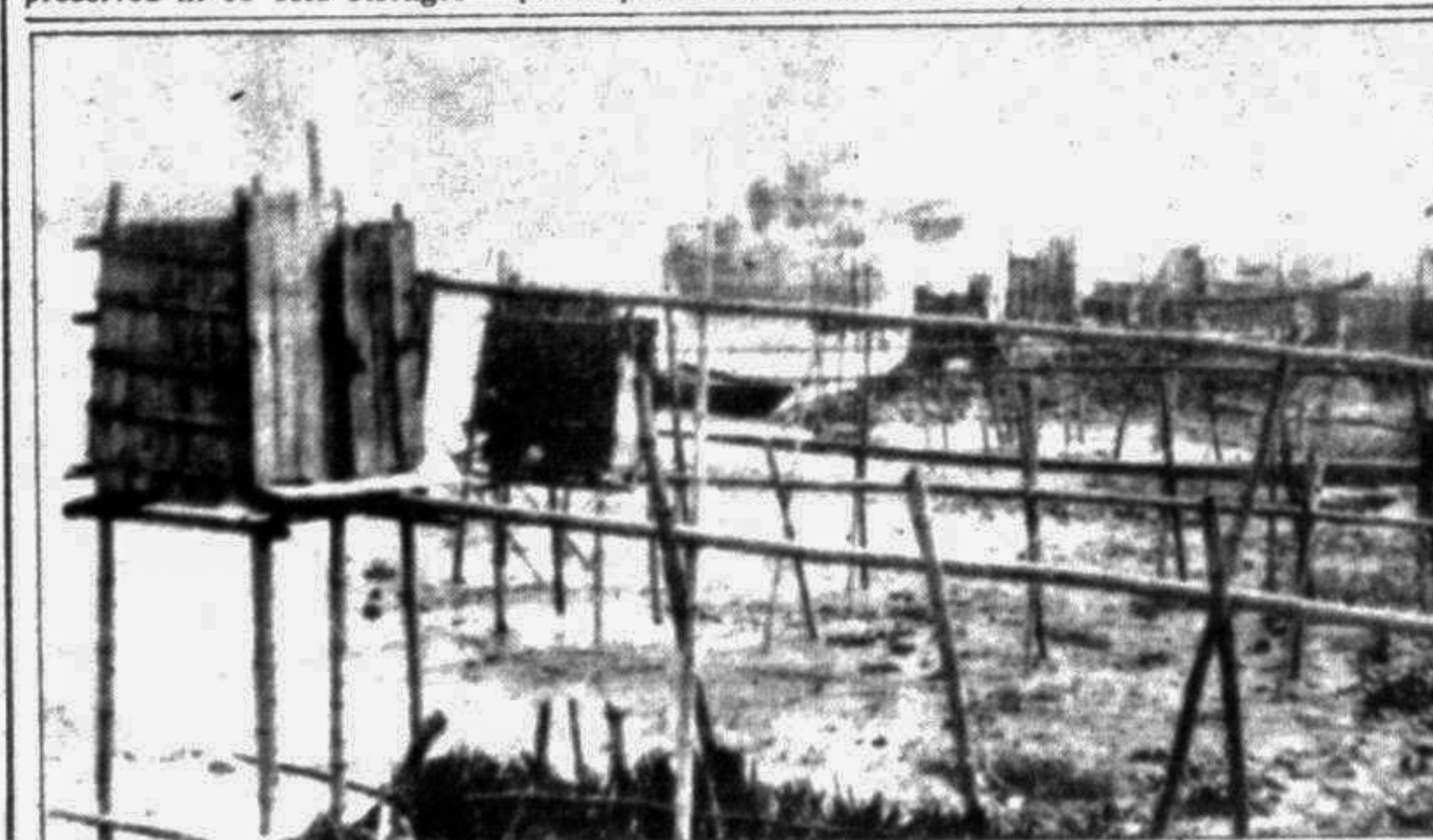
Potato growers for more cold storage facility

From Our Correspondent

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Some growers expressed that hundreds of tons of potato are perished every year for want of storage facilities. The cultivators of Munshiganj produce 45 per cent of total potato production of the country.



RAJBARI: Making of kancha latrines in a nearby ditch of the houses is a common scene in our country. But we do not think of the bad affects. — Star photo

Notes from Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Mar 30: Bangladesh Rural Development Board has undertaken a programme to impart training, on the manufacturing process of mud made stove among 500 members of different cooperative societies under 14 upazilas of Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj district, reports BSS.

Innovated by Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the stove can easily be made at home with mud, sand and wood dust. Use of such stove would save about 65 per cent firewood as well as 50 per cent time.

The board, in the meantime, disseminated the training among 300 members of cooperative societies under seven upazilas of the districts.

Great enthusiasm has been created among the rural people of the area to use the mud made stove for saving fuel and time.

Workshop on TBA concludes

A two-day Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) training workshop began here recently at Rajshahi Family Welfare Visitors Training Institute auditorium.

Divisional Commissioner NA Habibullah inaugurated the programme and spoke on the occasion as the chief guest.

The function was attended among others, by TBA Project Director Dr. ASM Kamal, UNICEF Divisional Chief Manjul Alam and Programme Officer (UNICEF, Dhaka) Dr. Golam Mostafa. Divisional Director, Family Planning Rajshahi, Afsar Ali Mollah presided over the function.

Speakers at the function stressed that mortality rate of expectant mother and newly born child should be reduced imparting training to the TBA and creating awareness among the people throughout the country.

A total of 34 district level officials including two women of Family Welfare Department participated TBA Training Programme.

Women Congress confce ends

The two-day-long gathering of the Rajshahi branch of Women Congress, Bangladesh Jago Nari ended here recently.

Presided over by Sultana Rezia, Chairperson of the Jago Nari, the gathering reviewed the activities of the organisation, a press release said.

3.5 lakh ton rice procured

UNB reports adds: About 3.5 lakh metric tons of rice had been procured against the target of 4 lakh in 16 districts of Rajshahi region during the current aman procurement drive.

According to official sources, the drive was started on November 15 and ended on February 29.

Of the total, 957 tons paddy and 28 tons rice were procured in Rajshahi, 19,833 tons paddy and 15 tons rice in Naogaon, 15,687 tons paddy in Natore, 3,564 tons paddy and 782 tons rice in Chapainawabganj, 30,520 tons paddy in Pabna, 3509 tons paddy and 2 tons rice in Sirajganj, 43,898 tons paddy and 375 tons rice in Bogra, 39,513 tons paddy in Joypurhat, 24,577 tons paddy and 116 tons rice in Rangpur, 10,430 tons paddy and 520 tons rice in Lalmonirhat, 20,703 tons paddy and 208 tons rice in Nilphamari, 15,975 tons paddy and 1,444 tons rice in Kurigram, 14,683 tons paddy and 293 tons rice in Gaibandha, 1,49,849 tons paddy and 321 tons rice in Dinajpur, 72,597 tons paddy and 141 tons rice in Thakurgaon and 14,931 tons paddy and 20 tons rice in Panchagarh.

Wrong survey affects sugarcane growers

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Mar 30: Standing sugarcane on acres of land awaits crushing during the current season under North Bengal Sugar Mills area.

The cane on the land is on way to be dried up for non-procurement by the mill authority.

Sugarcane growers of Ruppur, Shahapur, Mirkamari, Arombaria and Old Ishurdi under Ishurdi area have become frustrated at the negative attitude of the mill authority.

Some staff of the sugar mills are selling 'Purge', the supply order of sugarcane by taking extra benefit. The staff of the mill also surveyed the cancelled field wrongly and hence the sufferings of the farmers have increased much.

The Cane Development Officer and his staff showed in their statement that sugarcane was cultivated on about 3500

acres at Charmirkamari and Shahapur areas from where 70,000 tons of cane are expected to be supplied. The survey was done in the month of June-July in 1991. After three months, the mill started crushing.

A recent survey known as 'second survey' showed that about 1.50 lakh tons of sugarcane are still in the field.

The sugarcane growers are unable to produce molasses through power crushing as this is strictly prohibited as declared by the government.

Consequently, the growers have become less interested in cultivating sugarcane in the next seasons.

The growers of the locality have urged the concerned authority to take steps to follow the right procurement system to mitigate the sufferings of the farmers.

Lack of amenities in railway stations

NETRAKONA, Mar 30: Passengers travelling on Mymensingh-Netrakona-Mohangonj and Mymensingh-Jaria rail routes have been undergoing immense difficulties due to lack of basic amenities, reports UNB.

Thousands of passengers travel in these lines to and from different stations of Gouripur, Shyamganj, Netrakona, Barhatta, Jakurakona, Mohangonj, Purbadhalla and Zaria everyday.

The waiting rooms of various stations are almost unfit for use. Women passengers are the worst sufferers. The toilets in the waiting rooms are emitting bad odour constantly in the absence of cleanliness.

In some of the stations of these lines, there are no sheds on the railway platforms causing untold sufferings to the passengers. The situations worsens during the rainy season.

Only a few stations have upper class waiting rooms. But these are always found occupied by outsiders. In most of

the stations there are even no tubewells for the passengers.

The condition of the latrines in almost all the stations is miserable. The unhygienic condition of the latrines vitiates the atmosphere of the stations. In many stations there are no arrangement of toilets for which passengers, railway employees and others face acute problems.

Besides, in most of the stations, railway lands on both sides are grabbed by the illegal occupants. Shops, business establishments and dwelling houses are being constructed on the lands causing immense hindrances to the easy movement of the trains. But no action has yet been taken against them.

Weekly hats and bazars sit in and around several stations in these lines violating the orders of the railway authorities.

It is alleged that a section of railway officials are collaborating with those who occupied the lands illegally for personal benefit.

Pamri insects attack paddy in some areas

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, Mar 30: The IRR and boro fields in certain areas of the district have been invaded by pamri insects. Agriculture Extension Department sources said.

About three hundred hectares of land of IRR and boro in Nayanagar, Hossainpur, Khalia, Bajitpur and Amgram village of Rajor upazila have been seriously affected.

Another 75 hectares of land in Sadar, 65 hectares in Kalkini and 40 hectares in Shibchar upazilas have also been affected.

The AED has sprayed pesticides on 200 acres and planning to bring more land

under the protection programme soon.

Beggars have been increasing in number in the district town over the last months.

According to sources, there has been a continuous influx of beggars into the town during the last few months.

Unemployment and food shortage have driven poor people out of their villages and they have been converging into the town seeking jobs for survival.

But non-availability of job opportunities in the town has forced them to resort to begging.

50,000 female labourers in Greater Barisal

BORGUNA, Mar 30: The number of female labourers in rapidly increasing in Greater Barisal district, reports UNB.

According to the reports, there are 50,000 female day labourers in Borguna, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Bhola, Jhalakathi and Barisal district.

These female day-labourers are earning their livelihood by husking paddy and by working in the brickfields.

But opportunities for their work have been shrinking for various economic reasons.

Food of Work Programme has not yet started in the district while the scope of work on the agricultural land is limited.

Unmarried girls and abandoned wives constitute the majority of the female labourers.

Milk production has fallen

sharply due to shortage of milch cows in the district.

Huge number of cattlehead died of 'khura' disease and other natural calamities. Fodder crisis has also aggravated the situation.

Meanwhile, money lending business in the district is in full swing throwing the poverty stricken borrowers into dependency.

Informed sources said that a section of money lenders invested thousands of taka among the poor villagers at 15 to 20 per cent interest per month.

Farmers and poor villagers borrow money for cultivation and to meet their urgent needs by mortgaging their property or crop in the field.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to take action against the greedy money lenders.

2 Islamic Varsity students held with arms

KUSHTIA, Mar 21: Police today arrested two students, identified as JCD activists, from near the Islamic University campus, reports UNB.

They also recovered a country-made revolver and four rounds of ammunition from their possession.

The two final year Masters students, Jamal (26) and Jahangir (25), were allegedly planning to assault Rahat Jan, a teacher of Economic Department of the University, police said.

1609 power pumps sold

BARISAL, Mar 28: Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has sold 1,609 power pumps in eight southern districts under Barisal circle in the current winter season, reports BSS.

The districts are: Barisal, Jhalakathi, Pirojpur, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barguna, Madaripur and Shariatpur.

According to an official source, these pumps are being used for the cultivation of different varieties of winter crops in these districts.

Besides, BADC has sunk 25 wells and 118 shallow tubewells in Madaripur district