

Upazila roundup

GAZIPUR

Property worth Tk 50 lakh gutted

From Our Correspondent
Apr 22: Property worth about Taka 50 lakh were gutted in a devastating fire at Tongi bazar of the district recently.
According to the sources, the fire originated from a short circuit.
Later, Tongi Fire Service rushed to the spot and extinguished the fire. Officer-in-Charge of Tongi Fire Brigade, Jaman was injured while they were bringing the fire under control.
State Minister, Religious Affairs Ministry, M A Mannan and Police Super of Gazipur were visited the spot.
A case had been filed with Tongi thana in this connection.

BOGRA

Note books sale unabated

From Our Correspondent
Apr 22: The sale of note books is going on unabated in the district.
Note books are being sold in most of the book shops at town and different upazila market despite government ban.
Some unscrupulous traders are publishing substandard note books with take name and address. These note books are full of error. Besides some computer and printing press owner are also involved with these note books.
The book stall owner do not sell text books without note books and these note books are being sold at an exorbitant prices.

CHUADANGA

Erratic power supply

From Our Correspondent
Apr 22: Power failure has become a regular feature in Chuadanga town recently.
It is complained that power fails at least five to six times a day and power supply resumes at an interval of one to two hours.
The frequency of power failure reaches its peak time in the noon and the rest of the time its frequency is low.

GAIBANDHA

Procession against toll collection

From Our Correspondent
Apr 22: The businessmen of local bus stand area brought out a procession protesting toll collection from business establishments by the unruly youths.
The processionists paraded main roads of the town demanding punishment to those who launched attack on April 7 at business unit.
They handed over separate memos to Deputy Commissioner, Gaibandha and President of Chamber of Commerce to stop such activities.

The local mills, factories, shop and press owners have been suffering much due to irregular power supply.
To ensure the supply of electricity to the town dwellers, immediate steps are needed otherwise production in the local mills and factories would be abnormally decrease, it is felt.

BARISAL

ORS, IV salines distribution plan taken up

From Our Correspondent
Apr 22: Barisal Development Society (BDS) has undertaken a programme to distribute 16 thousand packets of ORS and 384 bags of IV salines in 8 upazilas of four southern districts in a view to combat the diarrhoea situation.
The districts are Barisal, Patuakhali, Gopalganj and Madaripur.
It is learnt, BDS has already started distribution of ORS and IV salines in the diarrhoea affected areas.
BDS is distributing ORS and IV salines in Sadar, Banaripara, Bakerganj, Agailjhara and Uzirpur upazilas of Barisal district, Baufal upazila of Patuakhali, Kotlaipara upazila of Gopalganj and Rajoir upazila of Madaripur district.
Besides, BDS will install 125 tubewells and will set up 200 latrines in these upazilas.

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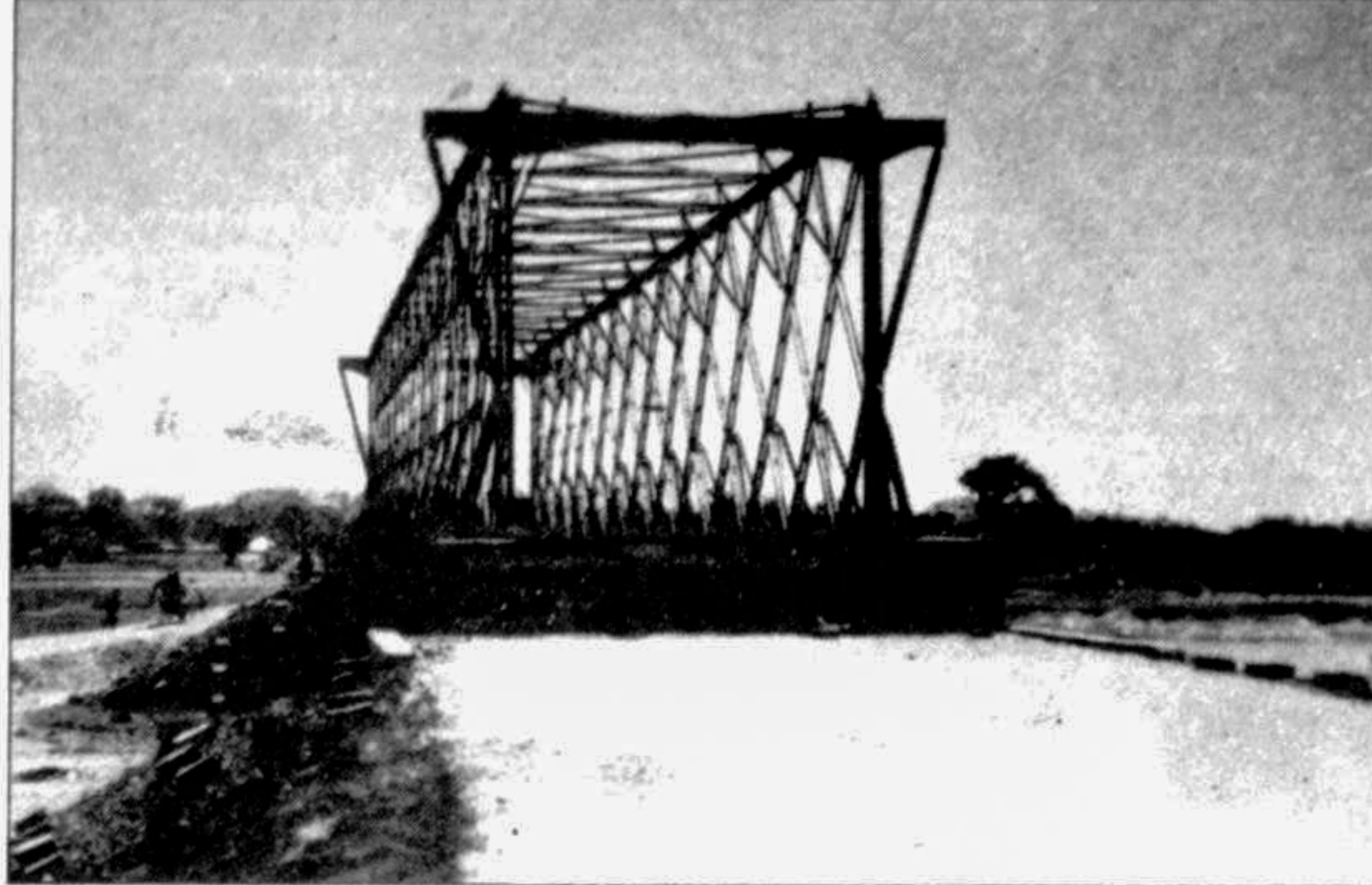
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BOGRA: The construction of the bailey bridge on Shariakandi Road was completed last year but it has not yet been opened to the vehicular traffic for the reasons not known. —Star photo

Artificial fuel crisis in N-dists prevailing

From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, Apr 22: Crisis of diesel and LP gas has been prevailing in 16 northern districts of the country.

Following the closure of entrance at river Barail from Jamuna for emergence of charlands of the Baghabari river port is still remains deserted.
Many oil tankers can not anchor at the oil depots of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) at Baghabari in Sirajganj district causing disruption in supply of diesel and LP gas in northern region.
It is gathered that portion of entrance to Barail river was dredged twice during the last two months. But the dredging gave no positive result.
The BIWTA has warned the heavy ships and tankers not to enter into the river Barail. At present, small and light tankers are anchoring at Baghabari oil depots which can not meet the minimum requirement of fuel in the northern region of the country.
It is observed that diesel and LP gas are supplied to the dealers mainly by road. Some dealers are taking delivery through river route and this fuel is being shifted to un-

known destination. Thus artificial crisis of fuel and LP gas is prevailing in the 16 northern districts.

When contacted, a source of BPC at Baghabari told this correspondent that they do not enquire about fuel which is taken by boat.
Meanwhile, serious deadlock prevails in the floating oil depot at Chilmari river port in Kurigram district. Emergence of charlands here has compelled the authority to shift the floating depots to the down stream. But the absence of road communication with the shifted depots, tank lorries can not reach here and fuels is supplied through the river route.
According to informations received from the districts of Sirajganj, Pabna, Bogra, Jaipurhat, Natore, Naogaon, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Gaibandha, Rangpur, Dhanpur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh mushroom growth of diesel sellers had been causing problems.
Following continuous drought, the cultivators can not irrigate their lands for

short supply of diesel and price hike of the fuel.

Bridge needed

In absence of a bridge on the river Karotoa at Shahzadpur upazila, ferrying of vehicles have turned risky.
It is gathered that people of Belkuchi, Chowhali and Shahzadpur upazilas use to do to Pabna and Dhaka by the shortest route via Shahzadpur.
The passengers are to cross the river Karotoa to reach North Bengal Highway.
Everyday a considerable number of motor cycles, bullock carts and jeeps cross the river by country ferry boats taking heavy risk.
Besides, on every Sundays, devotees use to go to the shrine of Hazrat Makhdoom Shahdola Shaheed (RA) at Shahzadpur. Thousands of hat-going passengers are also to cross the river with goods including handloom products on every Thursdays and Mondays.
People of the locality have urged upon the authority concerned to construct a bridge over Karotoa River for smooth and safe crossing.

Poura polls candidates busy in preparatory tasks

From Our Correspondent
KURIGRAM, Apr 21: Although the date for Pourashava election has not yet been announced, the probable candidates of the local pourashava election are seen active and they are coming in closer contact with the voters of the local pourashava area.

Some of the probable candidates have already started arranging tea-parties at their respective residences and elsewhere in the town.
Some of the probable candidates have already started visiting the areas for mobilising the support of the voters through vigorous door to door campaigns.
The ex-chairmen and commissioners, those defeated in the past elections and a good number of new faces have appeared in the contest this time.
The mastans, who had role during the last Union Parishad polls, have, however, not yet received invitation this time for various factors, at least till writing of this report. Money, mastans, hondas, and musalmen might be playing a considerable role. It is a widely apprehended by the probable candidates.
Apprehensions are also mounting that mastans and notorious criminals might be used in the elections as a number of probable candidates for the post of commissioners are allegedly going to contest

from their position. Till now, however, the campaigns are peaceful.
The tea-stalls, hats, bazars and commercial centers have already turned into busiest propaganda centers.
Due to the prevailing law and order situation and also due to the social atmosphere, many peace-loving social workers are not interested to come forward as candidates during the coming pourashava elections.

In spite of government restriction, huge quantity of wood is burnt regularly in the brickfields on the plea that coal supply is inadequate.
High consumption of wood raised the price of firewood in the district by at least Taka 20 a maund. Each maund of firewood now sells at Taka 80 as against Taka 60 a few months ago.

In the elections campaign, political parties have also been playing a considerable role as most of the political parties, though not officially will be in the race. Awami League, is select a single unified probable candidate which led to division within the party over the choice of candidate. They are still thinking for a better candidate.
The names of probable chairman candidates circulated in the area are: The defeated MP candidate in the last Parliament election, local BNP leader ex-Pourashava Chairman Mr Abdus Salam, ex-Zila Parishad Chairman and local Jatiya Party leader Rukunod dowlia Mondol, young probable candidate Kazul Islam (supported by 5-Party alliance), ex-Pourashava chairman for the last term Mr Sayed Monsur Ali Tunku, Mr Abdul Jalil as independent, Mr Altaf Hossain as independent, Mr Matior Rahman Mondol as independent and Mr Azghar Ali as independent.
The probable candidates are found attending public gatherings at places including the mosques during the prayer time to exchange greetings with the voters.
The date for the pourashava election has not yet been published but the election campaign is getting momentum at Kurigram.

Destruction of trees threatens ecological balance

SHERPUR, Apr 22: Indiscriminate destruction of trees and plants for use as firewood in the brickfields has been threatening ecological balance in the district, reports UNB.
In spite of government restriction, huge quantity of wood is burnt regularly in the brickfields on the plea that coal supply is inadequate.
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SIRAJGANJ: The farmer, Abdul Latif (30) of village Boirabari in Belkuchi upazila produced 125 maunds of potato in each bigha of land during the current season. The upazila authority has awarded him the title of 'Ideal Farmer' and gave prizes for his achievement. —Star photo

Across the country
Hardest days are halcyon days for Shahjalal

by SBDas

No hard news from the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology yet; for, the campus is free from those gunbattles and butchering that bring our universities into news headlines today, gruesome and depressing though.

But it has other stories to tell, different from those emanating from elsewhere. These are the tales of endeavours by its students, teachers and the vice-chancellor to make the most of whatever facilities and resources have come to them, replenishing and reinforcing those with their austerity and rigorous efforts with determination but gladly.

Here the students are content with the prime objective of their studies and face many a constraint and compulsion without any complaint and clamour. They have a little on-campus residence facilities, no regular canteen and library, no common room and many such other facilities and amenities available with a university, yet they go along. The pressure of curriculum and syllabus is also very high, yet the many discomforts they undergo cannot distract them from their pursuit. They go with make-shift residence in labour sheds in the campus, they comfort themselves in the impoverished tea-stall and do their library work in a small room of the administrative building. They are 435 in strength today and 95 per cent of them do not have residence facilities in the campus and the rest 5 per cent have only been recently shifted to the students' hall still under construction. Many still live in the sheds and the others are putting up at their friends' and relatives', some 7 km away from the university here in this town. The university has no transport for them either. They shuttle off some of their precious time.

Time is pressing for them, for they have little respite for non-academic activity. Their

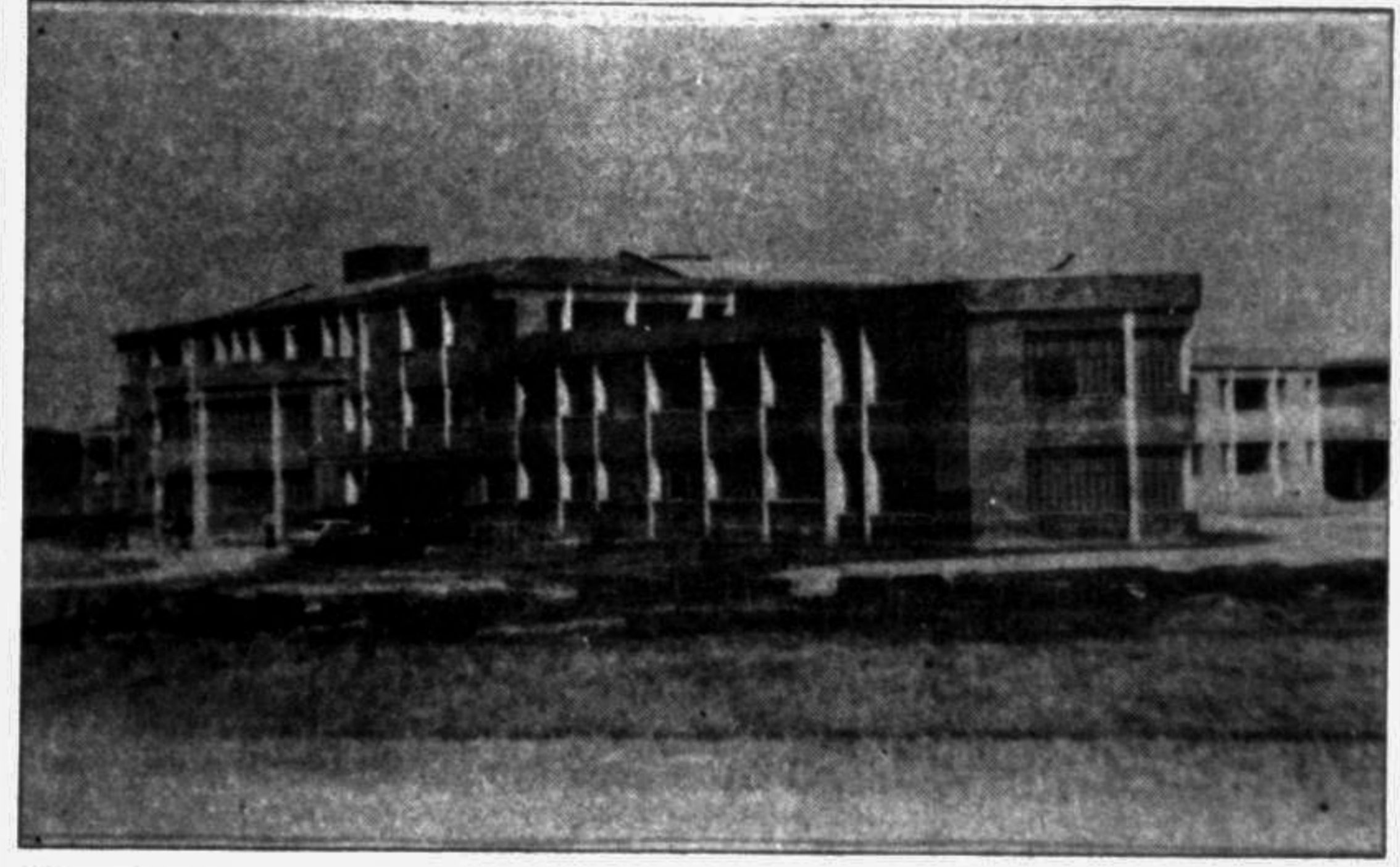
and equipment in their labs. Many of them are eminent scholars of the country who had more lucrative jobs, both at home and abroad, but they have brushed them aside to court the many shortcomings and multitude of snags that this teething university has. They are a band of pioneers dedicated to the building of their posterity.

When such are the struggles of students and teachers against the constraints and compulsions, its vice-chancellor, Prof Sadruddin Ahmed Chawdhry, a man who in his school days in British period so fondly cherished the dream of having such an institution here, now shouldering the onus of weathering his ship, has become a veritable dynamo making himself available in the classes, his office, work sites and Dhaka offices concerned with the university and the project, still finding time to meet people interested in the making of the university. He is an eminent professor of physics, and loves to teach despite other pressures. He is the vice-chancellor of a forming university and has to work hard in the office deep into night. He is the project boss now and so he goes round the work sites, sometimes suggesting some modifications here and there and solving this or that problem posed by the nature and feature of the acquired site, such as water-logging and finding and developing functional space in those 211 acres of land, 50% of which are either hillocks or marshes. Then he flies to Dhaka to move different authorities so as to stave off hurdles and bottlenecks that have been perennially pestering the institution, most frequent one being fund problem. His initiative to mobilise other sources for building the university has been invoking positive results as well. Already a local philanthropist, Dr Jamshed Bakht, has come forward to build for the university a medical centre

2nd phase of construction under the country's 4th 5-year Plan due to funds problem. It is understood that the university proposed a Development Scheme for its 2nd phase involving Tk 2713.62 lacs (including a Turkish grant of Tk 422.62 lac) for constructing another academic building, women's hall (part), Kamal Ataturk Boys' hostel (with Turkish grant), library hall, 24 residential quarters for teachers and staff, VC's quarters (part) and other ancillary facilities with a view to opening seven more disciplines accommodating an estimated 1800 students and droves of more teachers, but the amount has been heavily slashed down to Tk 1942.62 lacs (including the Turkish grant). And with this amount the university has got to acquire an additional 106.64 acres of land as the earlier 211 acres have but little functional space and require heavy drainage of funds for development of sites and foundation works. The most of 1st phase allocation of Tk 1050 lacs were consumed up by the land leaving little for construction.

The construction also could not be completed on the target date of June, '90. And though its registrar, Dr Bazil Mubin Choudhury, an eminent scholar of the country, joined his assignment as early as in Feb, '90 for opening the university in the later part of '90, it could not be started before 16 Feb, 1991.

This is a full-fledged university born after six decades of agitations and interminable waves of frustration of the people of this region, but happily it now incorporates those aims and objectives set forth in the constitution and curriculum prepared by a historic convention of educationists, philanthropists and other leaders held at Sylhet in 1936 for setting up such a university for Surma Valley at Sylhet. Two more conventions passed the scheme in 1945 held at this



SYLHET: The lone academic building of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology at Kumargaon. —Star photo

Degree Honours course in the university has been so designed as to give them in-depth knowledge of their Honours subject. As such the university has integrated two other closely-related subjects with the chosen one for Honours. There are no subsidiary subjects. And their result will be determined on the basis of marks obtained in all the three subjects. Besides, Bangla and English are compulsory for them and must pass in these subjects as well to get his Honours Degree. Physical exercises are there and a student must attend at least 20 classes of them in a year.

Teachers are no less inconvenienced. They also have no on-campus residence facilities. They have to reside in rented houses in this comparatively expensive town, a great factor that is heavily weighed by honest officers before joining their assignment here. But these are the professors who have come here to co-operate with their erstwhile colleague and friend in building a university with a difference, they have come to help Dr Sadruddin Ahmed Chawdhry, the first vice-chancellor of the university. They could not be provided with bearers and peons for fund problem, they did not mind carrying their own chalk, duster and register to the classes. They do not have enough helping hands in their department, they don't grudge doing that extra work. Even they did not hesitate to do this or that bit of masonry and carpentry for setting apparatus

at a cost of Tk 13 lac. The work on the project has been progressing fast. In UK while attending the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, he identified the areas where the Sylheti immigrant community there could participate in the making of the university. They evinced keen interest in the progress of the project as well. Tower Hamlets, local-government authority in London, are also considering to develop an action programme linked to the new university at Sylhet, because of its Sylheti population.

They are reported to have identified a number of needs for the programme and are seeking the support of other Burroughs in UK which have significant Sylheti population in their areas. The proposed Action Programme may include teaching national (UK) curriculum, teacher exchange programme, syllabus and material support to a primary/secondary school the university proposes to have on its campus and also induction programme for young Sylheti/UK people and UK professionals working with the Sylheti population there in the RECEPTION CENTRE the new university may open in its campus.

These are physics, chemistry, maths, statistics and economics. After the completion of 2nd phase work, some more disciplines are envisaged.

Still miles to go. But impatient as the people are to cut short its taxing time, a question popular with them is:

When we appreciate our own fund limitations, can't we go for more such grants as the Turkish one? Many feel that government should take some initiatives to tap more external resources for this university, named after a great saint, so that it can become a centre of excellence not only for this country alone, but for the whole region at large.

MAULVIBAZAR

Rickshawpullers create problems

Apr 22 - Uncontrolled rickshaw plying and parking in and around the town here have been creating multifarious problems to the city dwellers, reports UNB.
Most of the rickshaws plying on roads do not use light or lamp during night and many of them even have no licence.
Passengers alleged that the local rickshawpullers park rickshaws indiscriminately at Sylhet road near Kusumbagh cinema hall area creating obstacles to the movement of the vehicles and pedestrians.
Besides, when a bus reaches a stoppage a lot of rickshaws gherao the bus blocking its door creating difficulties to the passengers to get in and out of the bus.
City dwellers urged the authorities to gear up traffic management in the town with a view to remove the inconveniences of the people.

SRIMANGAL

One crushed to death

Apr 22: An old man was crushed under the wheels of a Sylhet bound passenger train near Srirangal railway station last week, reports UNB.
The victim was identified as Idris Ali (55), a betel-nut trader of Srirangal town.
He met the tragic end of his life while he was crossing the railway line, police said. The body was sent to Maulvibazar Sader hospital for autopsy.
An unnatural death case was filed with the local police in this connection.