

District roundup

DINAJPUR

Tk 60,000 property gutted

Mar 20: Property worth about Taka 60,000 were gutted and two goats roasted alive in separate incidents of fire in the district Wednesday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said nine houses at Barial village in Kotwali thana were burnt to ashes and two goats roasted alive in a devastating fire that originated from the residence of Jamiruddin on the day.

Fire fighters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after a frantic effort.

In another incident a stock of tush worth about Taka 5,000 were gutted in a fire originated from an abandoned bidi lift at Bichaganj Sugar Mills.

A housewife and a mother of three children committed suicide by hanging herself at village Bogra in Kotwali thana Wednesday.

The deceased identified as Rani, wife of Chand Das took her life by hanging herself at her village residence on Wednesday night.

Economic hardship was the cause of her suicide, police said.

SHERPUR

People suffering from waterborne diseases

Mar 20: People are suffering from various air and waterborne diseases in the district due to sudden change in weather, reports UNB.

It has been reported that a large number of people have been attacked by fever, cough, measles, pox, dysentery and other air and waterborne diseases following the abrupt change in the climate.

Suffering people said the weather remain dry and very hot during day-time while severe cold was felt during the night.

This sudden fall in the mercury may be cause of the diseases, local people said.

RAJSHAHI

Rival groups clash leaves 10 injured

Mar 20: At least 10 people were injured, two seriously, in a clash between two rival groups in the town in the last two days, reports UNB.

The seriously injured as Abdul Awal Dolar (28) and Aminul Islam (26) of Sepoypara were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

The clash ensued on Tuesday night between two rival groups of youths of two neighbouring areas over toll collection from the shops and clinics of those areas.

It is reported that an armed group from Hoscganj went Sepoypara to collect toll from a clinic but the youths of the area tried to resist them. At this the clash ensued and both the groups hurled hand bombs each other.

As a sequel to this Dolar and Aminul were seriously stabbed on Wednesday morning.

A case has been filed with the local thana.

CHANDPUR

Work on iron removal plant complete

Mar 20: The construction work of the lone Iron Removal Plant of the Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED) has been completed, reports UNB.

Official sources said the plant will now be able to supply 2.4 lakh litre pure drinking water, free of iron to about one lakh people of the Paurashava per hour.

The project costing Tk one crore, at Biplobgha area of the town was taken up by the Dutch government in the month of June-July, 1990.

FARIDPUR

Token strike observed

Mar 20: An hour long token strike was observed in all the nationalised banks here Thursday, reports UNB.

The bank employees of Sonali, Janata, Agrani and Rupali Banks observed the pendown strike from 9 am to 10 am to press home their eight point demand, including payment of festival bonus and promotion in all grades.

Bank sources said the hour long strike had caused much inconvenience to the people as the transaction in the banks closed at 11 am Thursday, a half-working day.

CHITTAGONG

Discussion on ideals of Islam

Mar 20: Participants at a discussion here called for forging greater alliance against anti-independence and terrorist elements, reports BSS.

Held under the auspices of Chittagong City unit of Bangladesh Muslim League (BML) at the Zilla Parishad auditorium, the discussion on ideals of Islam and Ramzan was chaired by BML leader Alhaj Mohammad Serajul Islam Chowdhury, a party press release said.

Central convener of the unified BML Kazi Abdul Kader spoke on the occasion as chief guest, while Joint Convener Alhaj M A Matin, Alhaj M A Salam, Principal Rezaul Karim, Kishan Editor Kazi Khalilur Rahman, Prof Nurul Islam Siddiqui, Advocate Badiul Alam were among other who took part in the discussion.

The speakers said that through pursuit of the true spirit of Islam only oppression and atrocity on Muslims in different countries can be resisted.

CHAPAINAWABGANJ

Tk 80.55 cr PDB bill outstanding

Mar 20: The Power Development Board has failed to realise outstanding electric bills worth Taka 80.55 crore in three circles of Northern zone, reports UNB.

According to official sources, the amount has been lying with different government organisations. The circle-wise outstanding bills are as follows: Rajshahi—Taka 26.87 crore, Bogra—Taka 21.75 crore and Dinajpur—Taka 31.91 crore.

The PDB lodged a number of cases against the owner of the government offices for realisation of the amount. But all the cases remained undisposed for a long time. In the meantime, PDB served several notices to the concerned authorities for the hearing of the cases.

The PDB has already snapped 3822 electric lines in these circles.

Official sources said the recovery of private bills are satisfactory. The system loss in the region is reducing gradually which now stands at 25 per cent.

MAULVIBAZAR

Coaster plunges into roadside ditch, one killed

Mar 20: A teen-aged girl was killed and 25 others were injured when a coaster plunged into a roadside ditch at Lassa tea garden in Srimongal thana on Saturday, reports UNB.

Police said the accident occurred when the driver of the coaster tried to overtake a truck on Dhaka-Sylhet highway and lost control over the steering.

The deceased was identified as Shilpi Begum, daughter of Rafiq Ahmed of village Pail in Habiganj district. The body was sent to Maulvibazar hospital for autopsy.

The injured were admitted to Sadar hospital. Police seized the coaster and the truck. But the drivers managed to escape.

A case was filed with the police in this connection.

NAOGAON

Boro cultivation plan taken up

Mar 20: A scheme has been taken up to bring 86,400 hectares of land under boro cultivation during the current season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, several demonstration plots have been set up to acquaint the farmers with the modern methods of cultivation.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation has been supplying high yielding variety seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other necessary inputs to the farmers at fair prices for the successful implementation of the scheme.

It is expected that about four lakh metric tons of rice will be produced with the implementation of the scheme.

About 2,000 deep, 3,000 shallow tubewells and 1,500 power pumps of Barendra Multipurpose Development Project are engaged in irrigation network to make the scheme a success.



SYLHET: The BSCIC acquired lands in Sunamganj to set up an industrial estate. The lands have lying unused for years together. — Star photo

IRRI-boro paddy on 45,000 acres of land under pests attack

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Mar 20: The IRRI-boro paddy on 45,000 acres of land under pest attack in seven thanas of the district.

The pests are locally known as lal-poka, lada poka and pamri poka which have attacked the IRRI-boro paddy field in various parts of the district.

According to an unofficial source, out of the above mentioned pest attacked areas, 6312 acres of land in Melandah, 4115 acres of land in Madurganj, 3480 acres of land in Dewanganj, 5702 acres in Islampur, 3142 acres in Bakshiganj, 6012 acres in Jamalpur Sadar and 4889 acres in Sarishabari thana.

The district Agriculture Officer, however, confirmed that about 10,000 acres of land have been affected by pests in these thanas.

An affected farmer informed that the green paddy plants have turned yellowish.

It is reported that the staff of the Agriculture Department prepared the report on the basis of the information supplied by the block supervisors who did not inform the concerned department about the pest attack. The pests have been at-

tacking the new fields.

The farmers told this correspondent that the spray machines supplied by the Agriculture Extension Department have been lying inoperative for want of spare parts. Experienced quarters expressed that if the government do not take any effective measures immediately, the situation may get out of control.

The farmers of the affected areas can not afford to buy the required quantity of pesticides which are being sold in the local markets at an exorbitant price.

Confirming the extensive pest attack in seven thanas of the district, the district Agriculture Officer informed this correspondent that due to shortage of pesticides and spray machines, they are able to stop this pest attack.

The farmers of the district urged the concerned authorities to take immediate measures to save the standing crops from pest attack.

Poor farmers in hardships

Another report says: The poor peasants of some villages in seven thanas of the district

are selling their standing IRRI-boro paddy in the field in advance at a lower price due to economic hardships.

A group of well-to-do people of the area is taking the advantage of the situation, it is informed.

The poor peasants are selling their paddy between Taka 80 and Taka 100 per maund whereas the paddy is now selling at Taka 180 to Taka 210.

The peasants of these areas are not getting loan from the Krishi Bank, Sonali Bank and other commercial banks as some dishonest bank staff harass them on various grounds, it is learnt.

It can be mentioned here that the prices of daily necessities have shot up in the markets of all the thanas. As a result, the poor and low income group has been passing their days in hardship. High price of fuel, fertilizer, scarcity of spare parts, seeds and pesticides are hampering their IRRI-boro farming much.

A total of about 3 lakh acres of land has been brought under IRRI-boro cultivation this year. Everyday 5 to 6 hours load-shedding is a common feature

BAU bachelor class from Apr 5

MYMENSINGH, Mar 20: The classes of the newly admitted part one bachelor level students (1991-92) of Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) will begin on April 5, reports UNB.

Nine embrace Islam

PABNA, Mar 20: Nine Hindus, including six women, of two families at Balmari village in Santhia thana were converted to the religion of Islam on Monday, reports UNB.

They were renamed as Rabul Islam (35), Mosammat Alekhatun (25), Mosammat Rashida Khatun (8), Sharifa Khatun (5), Sufia Khatun (2), Rabea Bawa (90), Nurul Islam (28), Firoza Khatun (20) and Ismail Hossain (6).

Reexcavation of Bhairab river going on

JESSORE, Mar 20: The reexcavation project of the fifty-kilometre-long Bhairab river here is going on in full swing, reports BSS.

The reexcavation project is being implemented under the Food for Work Programme of Fisheries Department with the financial assistance of IFAD.

For the purpose ten thousand metric tons of wheat equivalent to Taka 6.2 crore has been allocated. The project is expected to be completed within three years.

Under the project the reexcavation work of the Bhairab river from Khairata Bridge to Madhuganj Bridge which equals to about five kilometre is being implemented in the current dry season involving over 1.5 thousand metric tons of wheat.

Social Welfare and Women

Affairs Minister Tariqul Islam on Friday visited the reexcavation site at Kasimpur and Noapara union under Jessore Sadar thana to see for himself the progress of the work.

The minister was informed that about 30 per cent of the work earmarked for the current dry season has so far been completed.

He was also informed that the work of the project began in February last and will continue till April next.

Islam urged the concerned officials to achieve the target of the reexcavation project within the stipulated period.

The chairman of the project, officials of the fisheries department attached to the project, Deputy Commissioner of Jessore and local political leaders were present on the occasion.

116 live bombs recovered in Khulna town

KHULNA, Mar 20: Khalishpur police recovered 116 live bombs from Buribhita in the town, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police recovered the bombs hidden in six Dano tins from the Buribhita area at around 11 am on Wednesday.

A case was filed with the police but none was arrested in this connection.

It may be mentioned that various crimes including toll collection and terrorist activities are on rise in Khalishpur town area, for a long time.

Local leaders and elite said they time and again urged the authorities to nab the murgans and known hoodlums for the safety and security of the peace-loving people of the area. But they alleged that toll collection and snatching of valuables are going on with impunity before nose of the law enforcing agencies almost every day.

They also complained that a

vested quarter including some dishonest officials are patronising the criminals for their financial gain.

Another report adds: Power Development Board has earned a revenue of over Taka 1.17 crore from Khulna zone in the last February.

According to official sources, the PDB disconnected 1031 lines during the same period for non-payment of arrears bill of Taka 56.22 lakh.

Of these, 463 lines were disconnected for non-payment of arrears bill of Taka 17.23 lakh in Barisal circle, 311 lines snapped for Taka 27.20 lakh in Faridpur circle, 139 line for Taka 6.66 lakh in Jessore circle and 118 lines for Taka 5.13 lakh in Khulna circle.

Meanwhile, mobile court of PDB realised a fine of Taka 91,500 from 69 people for using electric connections illegally and snapped 110 connections in the last February.



DINAJPUR: Artists are rendering songs at a cultural function held at the Dinajpur Press Club recently. — Star photo

No security of life, property

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Mar 20: Security of life and property has become uncertain in six thanas of the district following deterioration of law and order situation.

The peace loving people of the district have been passing their days in fear as they can be victim of terrorism at any time.

Untoward incidents, free movement of terrorists with fire arms, murder in broad day light and subsequent release of the accused on bail from pressure of higher authority, stabbing, rape, hijacking, toll collection and violence have become common feature.

Illegal sale of wine and its use, cultivation of ganja and other immoral activities are also on rise. Campus violence in the educational institutions and its retaliatory measures have led several murders. Clashes between rival underground parties have vitiated the atmosphere.

After complaints, police conducted several raids to curb crimes but the law enforcing agencies failed to check the crimes. During raids police torture on innocent people have also been reported.

Unofficial sources informed that over 1000 cattle were stolen from villages of the district during last one year. It is also informed that some organised gang of miscreants demanded ransom to free the cattle.

Armed clashes occurred at different places where the activists used all kinds of fire arms but police failed to recover any arms so far.

In the month of December 1992, eightyfive cases were recorded with different police stations of the district which includes dacoity, hijacking, burglary, theft, riots, murder with riot and others.

In the month of January 93, 83 cases were recorded including four dacoities, three burglary, six thefts, three murder, six riot, two kidnapping and two smuggling cases.

In the month of February, the criminal activities doubled.

In the month of November last year, one Saiful Islam, a student of Islamic University was dragged out from a mess in Harinarayanpur of sadar thana and was axed to death.

On March 9, Mehedi an activist of BCL and student of Government College was attacked by armed miscreants in court compound who shot at his abdomen injuring seriously.

Mehedi was an accused in a case of stabbing Sumon an activist of JCD and student of same college a few months back. Mehedi came in court compound to discuss with his lawyers before attending Magistrates court. Miscreants after shooting escaped safely.

Lawyers of Kushtia Bar protested the incident immediately saying that absolute lawlessness prevailing and ab-

stained from attending courts, held meeting. Next day, they brought out procession and held rally where they urged the law enforcing agencies to take proper steps to prevent such type of incident.

Number of quacks on rise

Another report says: Number of quacks spreading fast in the rural areas of the district.

Quacks are found in every village of Kushtia, Bheramara, Mirpur, Daulatpur, Kumarkhal and Khoksa thanas of the district giving treatment to the poor and landless people.

Over 80 per cent people of the district live below the poverty line. The problem of unemployment is becoming acute day by day and as a result, the youth community of the country is suffering from frustration.

Being faced with unemployment problem many young men of different areas of the district are seeking sources of income for their survival. Finding no other alternative, a good number of jobless youngmen of the district have taken the profession of village doctors. The main centre of business of the village doctors or quacks is local hats and bazar.

Another report adds: Arable cultivable lands in six thanas of the district are gradually losing fertility due to extensive use of chemical fertilizers, some experts say.

Eid congregation to be held at 40 places in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Mar 20: The Eid congregation in the city will be held at 40 places this year under the auspices of Chittagong Central Eid-Jamaat Committee, reports BSS.

This was decided at a joint annual meeting of Central Eid-Jamaat Committee, Greater Chittagong Town Central and Regional Graveyard Establishment Organising Committee and Greater Chittagong Town Central Graveyard Foundation held at the Zila Parishad auditorium with the Deputy Commissioner, A H Abul Kasem in the chair.

According to a committee press release here tonight Awami League leader Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser, Committee General Secretary Alhaj Kamaluddin Ahmed Khan, imams of different mosques, journalists, representatives of various organisations also addressed the meeting.

It was also decided in the meeting that the main Eid congregation will be held at Chittagong Stadium at 7.30 am. Khatib of Chittagong Shaheer Jam-e-Masjid Alhaj Maulana Sayed Abdul Ahad-Al-Madani will lead the prayer, the press release added.

One killed, 50 others hurt in road mishaps

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 20: A man was killed and 50 others were injured in two road mishaps in the district Thursday, police and hospital sources said, reports UNB.

One unidentified person (40) was killed and 30 others were injured, four seriously, when a Nagarbari-bound bus collided head-on with a truck coming from opposite direction at Hatikumrul in Raiganj thana at about 11 am.

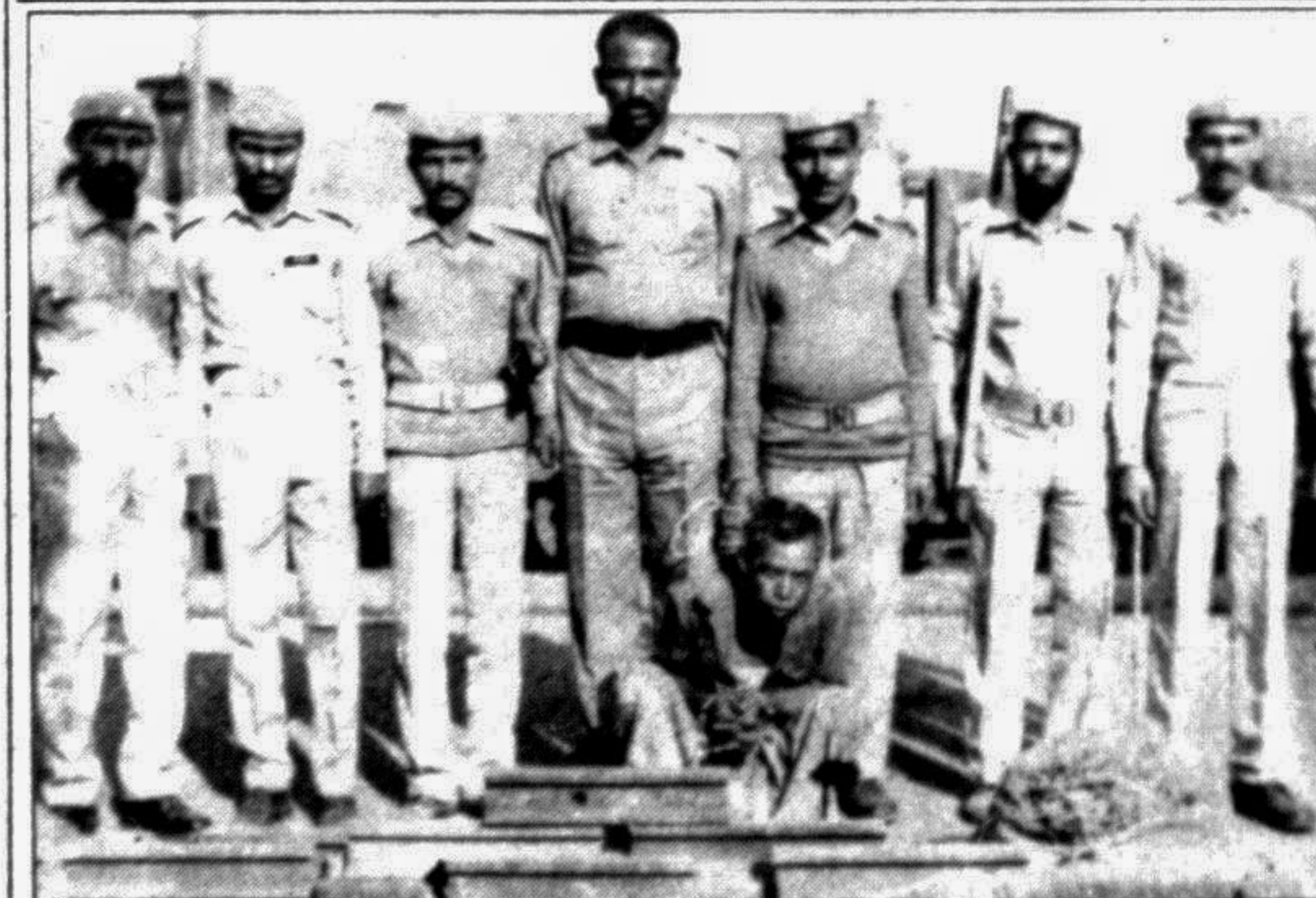
Four of the injured were admitted to Raiganj Hospital with serious wounds.

In the second accident that took place half an hour later, a Bogra-bound bus from Sirajganj fell into a wayside ditch at Shialkhol in Sadar thana, leaving 20 people injured.

Three seriously injured bus passengers were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

Drivers of both the vehicles were absconding.

Two cases were filed with Sadar and Raiganj police stations respectively.



JAMALPUR: Local railway thana security force arrested one person with huge quantity of slipper from a beel in Dewanganj thana of the district recently. — Star photo

12,000 cattle, poultry birds vaccinated

MAULVIBAZAR, Mar 20: The district Livestock Department has vaccinated 12,000 cattle and poultry birds in the six thanas of the district in the last month, reports UNB.

Official sources said the vaccination programme will reduce the mortality rate of the cattle and poultry birds and increase production.

Another report adds: Standing crops and vegetables on a vast land have already been invaded by rats.

Affected farmers alleged that they are unable to resist the rat menace for lack of necessary insecticides.

They urged the authorities to launch a rat killing campaign in the affected areas to combat the growing menace.

Another report says: Diarrhoea claimed one life and affected about 500 others in the district during last fortnight.

The dead was identified as Hazera Begum (25), daughter of Murtuj Ali of Aaraj village in Kularua thana.

Scarcity of pure water and consumption of adulterated food were attributed to the outbreak of the deadly disease. Local people alleged that scarcity of oral saline packets and necessary medicine have prevailing in the affected area.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to despatch medical teams with necessary medicines immediately to combat the spread of the disease.

Another report adds: Baraksha and Kularua thana

parishads of the district has taken up a project for reconstructing 10 registered non-government primary schools in the current fiscal year.

Parishad sources said an amount of about Taka 31 lakh have been sanctioned for the implementation of the programme.

The schools are Pabjurt, West Ganthai, Tuka, Chintapur, Ajmir, Surikandi of Barlekha thana and Aziz Rahman Adasyn, Uttar Sagarnal and Dakkhin Bijlee primary schools of Kularua thana of the district.

These were damaged by the natural calamities like recurrent floods, cyclones, storms during the last few years. With the implementation of the project primary education in the two thanas will get further boost.

Road construction progressing fast

TANGAIL, Mar 20: The construction of 7.6 kilometre long Porabari-Gopalpur Road at a cost of Taka seven crore is progressing fast, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the construction has been taken up under feeder road improvement project with Swiss assistance.

Besides construction of the road the project includes construction of a bridge over the river Shalajani and six culverts at different points.

Twentyfive houses were gutted in a fire on Sunday at village Purbahuli of Katuli union under sadar thana.