

District roundup

CHITTAGONG

Workshop on VGD programme begins

Mar 30: A two-day workshop on Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme for district Relief and Rehabilitation Officers of Dhaka and Chittagong Divisions began at the Zila Parishad auditorium here on Monday, reports BSS.

Jointly organised by the Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation and World Food Programme (WFP), the workshop was inaugurated by Director General of the Directorate Mohammad Shafiqul Islam.

Speaking on the occasion, Islam said the introduction of revised reporting formats and arrangements for VGD programme would familiarize the participants with the current expansion programme.

He said it would also help relief officers to identify and select materials and to develop understanding about appropriate techniques and methods for organising and conducting orientation.

Deputy Commissioner A H Abul Kashem, Chief of Training Programme of WFP Yunus Khan and Workshop Coordinator M A Hamid also spoke.

About 26 relief and rehabilitation officers are participating in the workshop.

SIRAJGANJ

Dacoits loot Tk 1.5 lakh cash, valuables

Mar 30: Dacoits robbed three grocery and two houses on WAPDA embankment in Kazipur thana of the district of cash and valuables worth about Taka 1.5 lakh on Sunday last, reports UNB.

Local sources said the armed group of about 16 dacoits came to the area by engine boat and launched their attack at about 2 pm, and decamped with cash and valuables, including radio cassette recorder, radio and ornaments, from the shops and houses at gun point.

Sanwar Hossain filed a case on behalf of the affected people with Kazipur police in this connection. None was arrested yet.

PABNA

Use of trees as firewood in brickfields unabated

Mar 30: Trees of the district are on the verge of extinction as brickfield owners are using trees as firewood indiscriminately violating government restriction, reports UNB.

It is alleged that a huge quantity of firewood is being used by brickfield owners instead of coal. Firewood is being sold between Tk 80 and 90 per maund. Brickfield owners prefer firewood to coal for use in manufacturing bricks due to its cheap price.

Use of firewood is prohibited by the government under "Forest Preservation Act" to maintain ecological balance.

Local people alleged that fruit bearing trees like mango, jack-fruit, palm and other valuable trees are being felled for use in brickfields.

Firewoods are found openly cutting in saw mills and piled up in some brickfields for use in manufacturing bricks.

It is learnt that law-enforcing agency is indifferent to the indiscriminate use of firewood in the district.

According to experts, use of firewood in the brickfields can be discouraged by arranging immediate supply of LP gas to manufacture bricks.

JAMALPUR

Lawyer assaulted, ward commissioner held

Mar 30: Police arrested a newly-elected ward commissioner on Sunday for involvement in assaulting a lawyer of the Sadar thana Magistrate court, reports UNB.

Ward Commissioner Tahir Chowdhury was detained from the oath taking ceremony held at the Jamalpur Public Hall.

He along with a local BNP leader was accused of an attempt to murder case, filed against them last month, for assaulting Advocate Abdul Kuddus at the court premises.

Tahir, later on Sunday was produced before the Sadar Magistrate court but his bail petition was rejected.

Meanwhile, District Lawyer Association at a meeting demanded exemplary punishment of the accused.

Earlier, the lawyer decided not to defend Tahir in the case.

NATORE

Tk 5,750 as fines realised, 20 cases filed

Mar 30: Two mobile courts realised Taka 5,750 as fines and registered 20 cases against people from different areas of Natore and Rajshahi districts in the current month for using old weighing instruments instead of those of metric system, reports BSS.

According to an official source, mobile courts were conducted by district and thana administrations, police and Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution. The mobile courts seized 100 old weighing instruments.

SATKHIRA

Lightning kills oldman

Mar 30: An old man was killed by lightning and standing in crops on 15,000 acres of land were damaged when a nor wester accompanied by heavy rain and thunder bolt hit over the district on Monday last, reports UNB.

The victim Shaikat Ali (42) of Chandipur in Shyamnagar thana of the district died by lightning while he was returning home.

Another message adds: Huge quantity of polyester and tetrone cloths worth about Taka two lakh were seized from a shop in Satkhira market in the evening.

The goods were seized during an anti-smuggling drive in the district and three people were arrested in this connection.

The seized cloths stored at the shop for smuggling were later deposited with the local Customs authority.

COMILLA

SSC examinee commits suicide

Mar 30: An SSC examinee allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself from a ceiling fan at his residence at Bagichagan in the town Friday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Sajjad Pervez Alam (15) of Comilla Zila School.

The cause of the suicide could not be known. A case was filed with the local police in this connection.

KISHOREGANJ

Chicken pox breaks out alarmingly

Mar 30: Chicken pox has broken out in an alarming form in all the 13 thanas of the district, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said chicken pox affected people are pouring into local health centres in large numbers everyday. Local people said the disease is engulfing new areas creating panic among the people.

Curative medicine is scarce in the hospitals as well as in local markets, it was alleged.

Doctors attributed the cause of the spread of the disease to intake of adulterated foodstuff and drinking of impure water.

Local leaders have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to check the spread of the disease.

FENI

16 arrested with ganja, wine

Mar 30: Bangladesh Rifles in a raid arrested 16 people who were allegedly gambling and drinking alcohol in a residence in the town on Sunday, reports UNB.

Acting on a secret tip, BDR jawans led by Major Monjur Ahad gheraoed the residence at Academy road and caught 16 people red-handed with 35 packets of ganja, 2 bottles of wine and other materials. The arrested were later handed over to the police.

TANGAIL

Chairman, ward commissioners take oath

Mar 30: The oath-taking ceremony of the newly-elected chairman and 18 ward commissioners of Tangail paurasava was held recently at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room, reports BSS.

Abdul Matin, Deputy Commissioner conducted the oath. Shamsul Haq has been elected Chairman of Tangail paurasava.



NARAYANGANJ: Speaker Shaikh Razaque Ali visiting the exhibition of local Photographic Society held here at Shaheed Zia Hall in observance of the 20th founding anniversary of Shapla, a cultural organisation recently. — Star photo

Drinking water crisis

8,000 tubewells inoperative in Kushtia

KUSHTIA, Mar 30: Eight thousand tubewells have become inoperative due to rapid fall in groundwater level following the adverse effect of Farakka causing drinking water crisis in the district, reports UNB.

Persisting drought for the last three months has also aggravated the situation.

Meanwhile, G-K Project pump house which started operation from March 1 could not operate due to abnormal low flow of Ganges water effecting irrigation in 1,20,000 acres of land in Kushtia, Jhenedah, Magura, Chuadanga and Jessore districts.

A huge number of fishermen of the district are facing manifold problems due to the shortage of funds and fishing materials.

About 10,000 fishermen are living in six thanas of the district for whom it has become difficult to continue the profession as the price of nets and

boats has shot up.

Besides, pisciculture in the six thanas has been largely affected as a good number of water bodies have dried up due to siltation in the Garal and Ganges.

Fishermen alleged that they are to borrow money from money lenders at height rate of interest as they are not getting adequate bank loan.

Speedy bus takes life of school student

KHULNA, Mar 30: A speedy bus has taken the life of a school student on Khulna-Jessore highway on Friday, reports UNB.

The victim, identified as Alim, was a student of class seven of Khulna Zila School.

He was knocked down by micro bus when he was returning home by a bicycle, police said.

Reliable source said many drug companies are selling substandard drugs violating the rules and regulations of drug manufacturing.

Patients alleged that a section of physicians, particularly some village quacks are prescribing the spurious drugs.

Another report adds: Kushtia Municipal Kutcha Market have become very much congested causing much inconvenience to the people who come for their daily shopping.

This market was constructed 17 years back having all sorts of facilities. But by this time, population has increased in great number and the market can not accommodate huge rush of people at present.

Immediate expansion of the market is very essential if the inconvenience of the people is counted. People feel that present rice market is required to be shifted to other place for convenience of market goers.

Notes from Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 30: Bangladesh Sangbadik Samity and District Press Club in a joint meeting with Abdul Quddus in the chair recently expressed deep concern over hindrances in performing professional duties of the local correspondents of the national dailies.

The meeting sought co-operation of the political, labour, students and other organisations in this respect. Among others Rafiqul Alam Khan, Aminul Islam Chowdhury, Ashit Chowdhury, Nurul Islam Babu, Hedayatul Islam, Syed Shamin Shirajee and Abdul Mannan Sharif spoke in the meeting.

The meeting also called upon the administration to take steps for improving the law and order situation of the district town.

Three minor children burnt alive

Three minor children Hajera Khatun (8), Hasna Banu (6) and Ashrafal Islam (1) daughters and son of Mantaz Ali of village Kalupara in Tarash thana were burnt alive in fire incident took place on March 18 night.

Asma Khatun (35) wife of Mantaz Ali was admitted at Tarash hospital with serious burn injury. Besides, three houses, crops and other valuables worth about Taka 80 thousand were gutted. Fire originated from the kitchen of Mantaz Ali while cooking shehri food.

Fishing project looted, 4 held

The Joisagar Fishing Project of Nimgachi in Raiganj thana was looted on March 17 night and four of the criminals were handed over to police while fleeing.

A gang of 20/25 armed miscreants raided the project area and fled away with valuables and fishes worth about Taka five lakh while fleeing by truck, local people led by Project Manager Abdul Bari chased the miscreants by a jeep and caught Ramzan Ali, Abdul Rashid, Alam Mia and Abdul Hakim. They were later handed over to police.

A case has been lodged with Raiganj police in this connection.

District Sports Assoc executives

A 22-member committee of Sirajganj district Sports Association was formed here recently with Deputy Commissioner A Z M Shafiqul Islam in the chair.

Police Super Mokhesur Rahman, ADC (General) M R Amin Khondoker, Abdul Latif Mirza, ex-MP and Municipal Chairman-elect T R M Noor-e-Alam Helal were elected Vice-Chairman, Mokaddes Ali was elected General Secretary, Gazi Shafiqul Islam and Quamrul Islam were elected joint secretaries and Syed Abdul Rouf Sirajee Mukta was elected treasurer of the association.

Bangabandhu's Birth Day observed

Sirajganj district unit of Bangladesh Awami League and various socio-cultural organisations observed the 73rd birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 17. In the discussion meeting with district AL President Motahar Hossain Talukder presided over the discussion meeting. The speakers highlighted on the life long works of the associated leader. Among others former MP Abdul Latif Mirza, Anwar Hossain Rotu, Shahidul Islam Talukder, Golam Kibria and Bimal Das spoke on the occasion.

Courts in thana level demanded

Sirajganj district Bar Association in a meeting on March 18 with Advocate Abdul Rahman in the chair demanded re-setting of Civil and Criminal Courts in the thana levels.

The speakers said that after shifting the lower courts at district head quarters, incidental costs of the cases have increased and the poor men have fallen victim of such problems. They also told that in the past, cases were being disposed earlier in the thana levels. For greater interest of the people, the courts of Assistant Judges and Magistrates need re-shifting at thana levels, the meeting added.

Two hotel boarders found dead

BRAJMANBARIA, Mar 30: Police recovered two bodies including of a young girl from a hotel in the town today. The young girl was identified as Halima Begum, 1st year student of Brahmanbaria Women College. But the boy, however, could not be named immediately, reports UNB.

Bus journey hazardous in Satkhira

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Mar 30: Bus journey in all the eight routes of Satkhira district has become hazardous in absence of good roads, adherence to traffic rules and due to reckless driving and over loading of buses which often lead to accident and causes untold sufferings to the passengers.

According to the sources, the law enforcing agency can not find out the drivers responsible for the accidents as they use fake names and addresses without having any valid licences.

Whenever a bus stops passengers get on the vehicles and they are even allowed to sit on the roof of the bus and to stand on the bumper even or on the footboards.

This entails a great risk for

passengers and in addition buses also carry a huge quantity of goods on the roofs. As a result many road accidents have occurred on the roads during recent period.

Most of the roads in the district are narrow and besides numerous potholes have developed on these roads in absence of timely repairs. As a result in rainy days these roads turn unserviceable thus causing much misery to the travellers.

It is also found that most of the buses and minibuses on the roads are engaged in mad competition to pick up passenger without considering the capacity of the vehicles. Moreover, the bus conductors realise excessive fare and every often misbehave with the passengers, it is also widely felt.

Dinajpur town beset with manifold problems

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, Mar 30: Dinajpur district town with about 1,50,000 inhabitants has long been neglected by the paurasava authorities.

The middle class and poor section of the people are yet to enjoy urban facilities though the paurasava was established here long ago. No government in the past bothered to minimise the problems of the town dwellers. Protests were raised several times against the paurasava authorities but to no effect.

Almost all the roads in the town are so narrow that two rickshaws cannot ply side by side at a time. Besides, the roads once damaged are not repaired again. During the rainy season, the traffic on the roads meet with total collapse. The vital road linking the kachari has long been left in a precarious state.

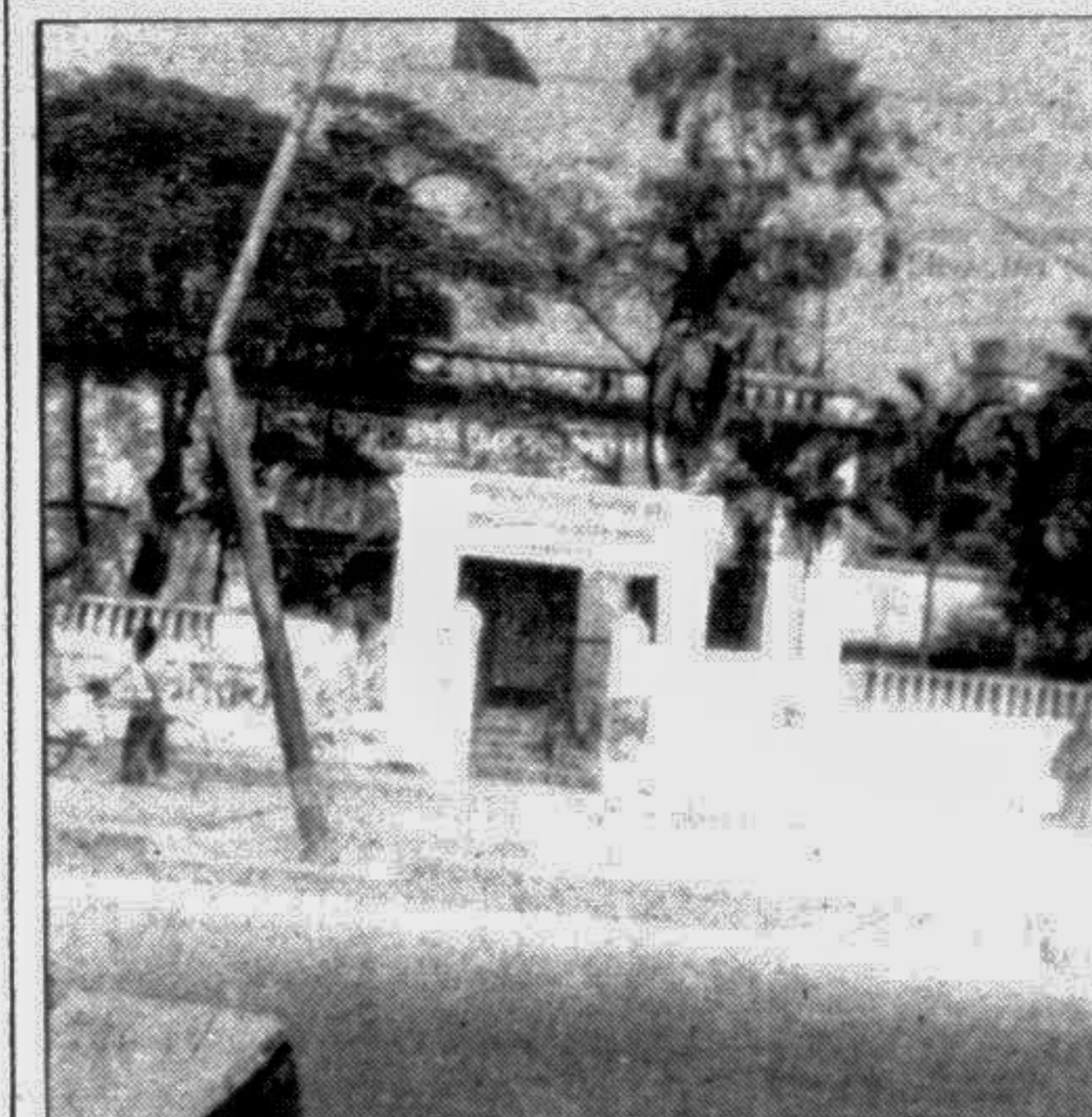
Roadside drains with heavy silt overflow after a slight rainfall disrupting road communication and civic life. Continuous flow of service latrines emit bad odour causing

serious air pollution. Most ponds are filled with waterhyacinth and stagnant water creates massive breeding centres for the mosquitoes. As a result, mosquito menace is so serious that it goes beyond endurance. Even at day time, the babies are kept under mosquito-nets.

Most tubewells in the town are lying out of order due to which about fifty per cent of inhabitants are compelled to collect water from the nearby ponds and canals. As a result, most people are suffering from intestinal disease. Markets on the other hand are always loaded with filth garbage and are rarely cleaned causing serious inconvenience to both customers and sellers.

Besides, the education sector also lacks minimum facilities as most high and primary schools are running without adequate number of teachers.

Moreover, the beggars shatter peace of the dwellers. Hundreds of slums have been created causing sheer environmental pollution.



NARAYANGANJ: A broken electric pole in front of local Rifle Club at Chashara which may bring danger at any moment. — Star photo

Sale of bidis without bandrolls unabated

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 30: The sale of bidis without bandrolls in all the 13 thanas of Kishoreganj district has been causing heavy loss to the government.

According to the reports, many bidi factories in the district which employed thousand of workers are selling bidis without bandrolls. The consumption of bidis has increased during the recent times due to the rise in the prices of different brands of cigarettes.

As per the existing law taka 37 must be paid as excise duty for each 100 packets of bidis. It is found that the owners of the bidi factories supply their products to the markets without bandrolls. It is also observed that they use forged bandrolls.

The collection of the used bandrolls from the retail sellers is going on, it is alleged. Besides, the actual production of the factories is not shown in the papers for evading government duties.

It is alleged that many custom officials were involved in such bad practices.

Another report adds: The gay girls are moving freely in the district town and this is creating social problems.

The gay girls mostly from poor families are engaged in immoral activities spreading venereal diseases among the youths of the town.

Some of the gay girls informed that in the absence of

job opportunities they are compelled to take this heinous occupation to earn their livelihood.

The school and college students and the youths are enticed by the ugly gestures of these gay girls in different places of the town. Some are also engaged in other anti-social activities after the sunset, it is alleged.

The gay girls are found roaming near cinema halls, railway stations, clubs, bus stands, hospital area and roadsides in search of clients.

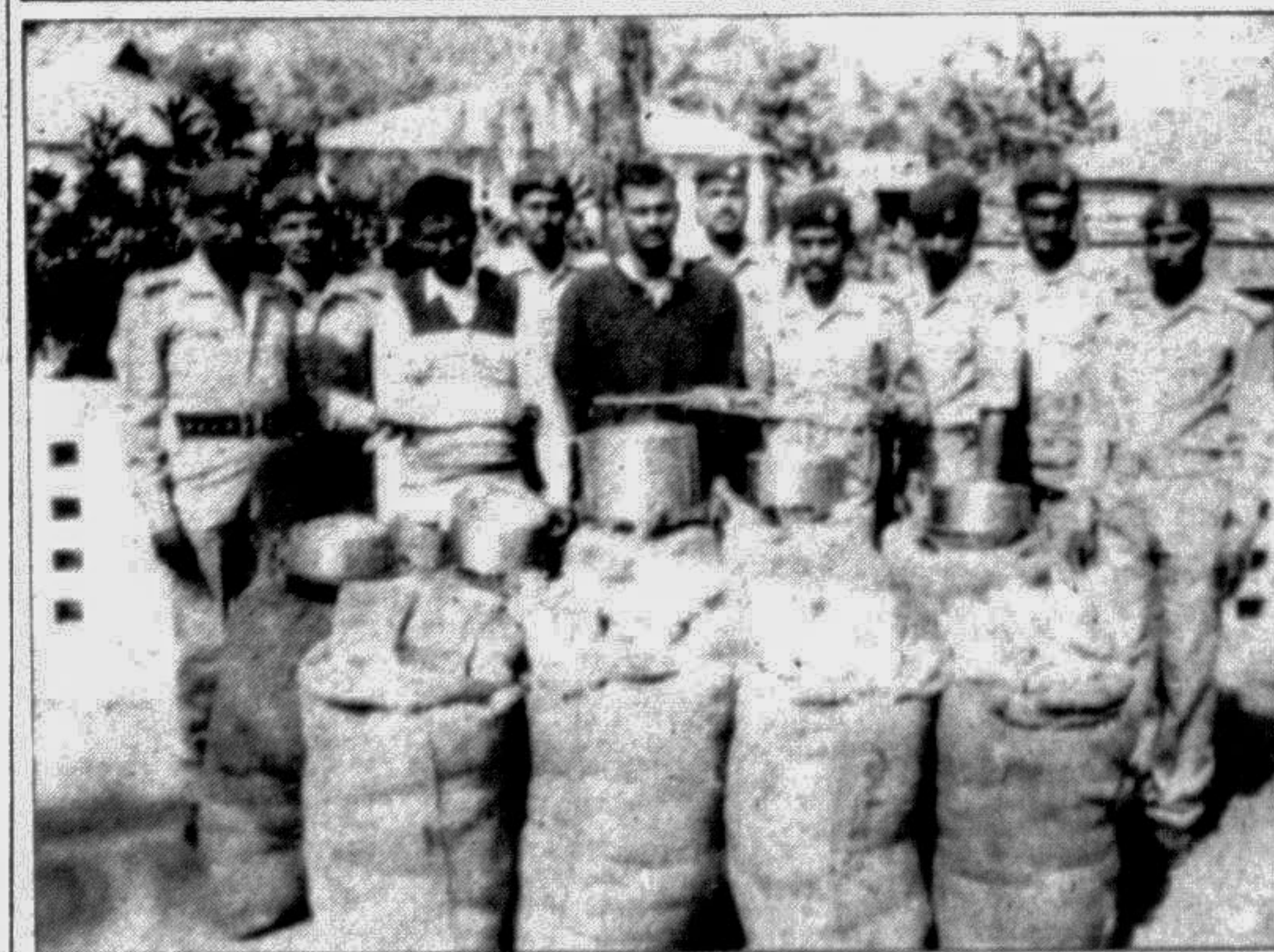
Chhatra League thana, college unit confce held

From Our Correspondent

MOULVIBAZAR, Mar 30: Annual conference of Bangladesh Chhatra League (B-K), Rajnagar thana and college units was held recently at Rajnagar Degree College premises.

Local Chhatra League leaders Sunawar Miah Gedon presided over the conference while, General Secretary of Moulvibazar district unit of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-NU) Mstur Rahman Masik attended as chief guest.

Nazimuddin Ahmed Nazrul, district unit President of Chhatra League (B-K) inaugurated it.



RANGPUR: Kotwali police arrested two smugglers with Indian jute seeds and steel pots worth about Taka 75,000 from Aaratur recently. — Star photo