

# Erratic power supply hampering production in mills, fields

From Our Correspondent

**SIRAJGANG, Jan 12:** Frequent power failure in the district hampers production in the factories and fields and causing sufferings to the domestic consumers.

The power disruption has become a regular matter in the district specially in Kaziupur, Kamarkhanda, Belkuchi and a post of Chowhali thana. In response to the demand of the consumers, new connections are being extended causing loadshedding during the peak hours.

A total of 12 megawatt of power is needed to meet the requirement of the district which the PDB can hardly afford following short supply from the national grid.

Supply in Shahzadpur, Ullapara and Raiganj thanas in comparatively satisfactory as the areas are included under Sirajganj Palli Bidyut Samity — 1 (Ullapara).

While contacted, a source of Sirajganj supply office of PDB told The Daily Star that loadshedding is happening to keep equality in supply of power in different areas. Besides, short-

age of supply from the national grid sometimes causes trouble in the thana areas.

## Land fertility

Another report says: Land fertility and productivity of crops have been decreasing alarmingly in 16 northern districts due to shortage of organic elements, zinc and sulphur in soil.

Unplanned and rampant use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides have been causing such problems of agricultural land.

It is gathered that during seventies six per cent organic elements were found in lands of northern region which have now reduced to 1.5 to two per cent.

Normally three per cent organic element is required to maintain usual fertility of land. The organic element of land is originated from cow-dung, rotten straw and other green crops like khesari and dhun-cha.

Cow-dung is not widely used as fuel after turning it to 'Ghute' in the village areas. Dried 'dhuncha' plants are also

used as fuel. Khesari pulses are not used as manure due to high price and straw is used as fodder of the cattle and to the roofs of the village huts.

At present chemical fertilizers are widely used to grow more crops. Five tons of cow-dung manure is required for one hectre of land which is not found anywhere in the northern districts.

During eighties 3000 tons of pesticides and two and a half lakh tons of chemical fertilizers were used which is now found at 8000 tons and 21 lakh tons respectively.

The farmers use the chemicals in an unplanned method. They are not guided by the agricultural expert's or the representatives of the producers of pesticides and fertilizers.

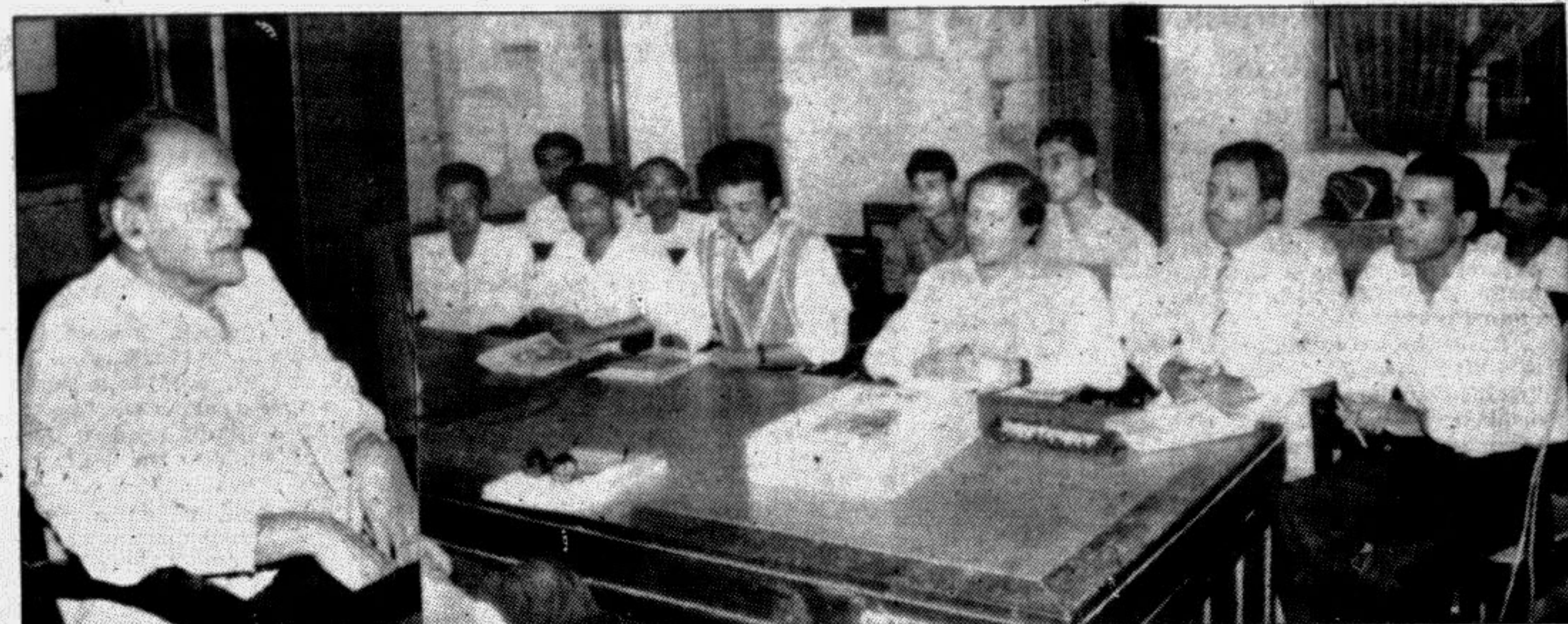
Due to rampant use of chemicalised pesticides and fertilizers, the farmers have also been suffering from health hazards.

According to a source of agricultural research authority, 50 lakh hectares of land in 16 northern districts are in short-

age of sulphur and 20 lakh hectares are in zinc shortage. Zinc comes from the minerals of soil and sulphur comes from mineral and organic elements of soil. Zinc and sulphur producing capacity of land have fallen due to wide use of chemical fertilizers.

Water Development Board (WDB) sources have detected higher proportion of 'nitrate' in water of the northern region. Banned DDT is also used as pesticide illegally. Poisonous chemicals are also found in tubewell water and vegetables produced in the northern region. Pisciculture is also affected by chemical reaction of fertilizers and pesticides. Due to pollution of water a considerable number of people specially the poor folks have been suffering from various intestinal diseases.

Planned use of organic and chemical fertilizers with reasonable proportion is needed to keep productivity and fertility of land in 16 northern districts, it is expressed by agricultural experts.



RAJSHAHI: Prof M Shamsul Haq, Chairman, University Grants Commission talking with the newsmen at the local Press club recently.

## Govt believes in free flow of information

**BRAHAMANBARIA, Jan 12:** Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda said here on Sunday that the present democratic government believed in free flow of information in the country, reports BSS.

As the present government is an accountable and transparent in running the administration, it has no weakness. It's a popular government and people have total support to it," he said.

The minister was speaking as the chief guest at the foundation laying ceremony of a television relay station here.

Barrister Huda said, Bangladesh Television had been broadcasting news of the opposition parties regularly. "We do not need to control the media. People being the best, judge will evaluate our activities during elections," he said.

The construction work of relay station at a cost of Taka 15 crore is expected to be completed before June next year. The 10-kilowatt station is being built at the Dattya Para at the

town with financial assistance from the French government. The 120-feet tower will cover 90-kilometer.

Huda said, all the activities of the government was directed towards development of the country, its people and their culture. "Each of our activities reflect politics of nationalism," he added.

He said, Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman was the first to awaken the nationalist forces in the country and as such nourishing and flourishing of language, tradition and culture of the people was our politics.

Among others, State Minister for Relief, Harun Al Rashid, Begum Asiya Rahman MP, Abdul Sattar Bhuiya MP, A K M Salamatullah, Director General of Bangladesh Television, Hamdul Haque Tuku, General Secretary of Brahmanbaria district BNP, Sheikh Muhammad Habibullah, Convenor of Juba Dal and Sirajul Islam, President of Chhatra Dal spoke on the occasion.

## No step to preserve bamboo clusters

**NETRAKONA, Jan 12:** Hundreds of bamboo clusters are diminishing fast in the district due to lack of proper maintenance, reports UNB.

No effective measures are being taken by the Agriculture Extension Department either to save the bamboo clusters or to boost its production. The clusters are being used as firewood by the ignorant farmers.

According to an expert, the proper nursing and maintenance enables a bamboo sprout at least 15 to 20 tender plants a year. But due to the unrestricted felling of the bamboo plants before attaining maturity, the number has dropped to three to five.

It has been reported that the production of new bamboo plants were not increasing in proportion to its growing needs in bamboo-based industries and the construction of kutcha houses in the rural areas of the district.

The bamboo clusters are also diminishing due to damage of head of tender plants for

unknown diseases. The Agriculture Extension Department hardly seen to advise the growers regarding nursing and maintenance of the clusters.

The shortage of bamboo have caused a price hike, and in an area where 80 per cent of the rural houses are katcha, it has been hampering the proper maintenance and repair of the dwelling houses of the poorer people.

The shortage has also affected about 10,000 families in the area, who used to earn a living through the production of bamboo made articles.

Whip MA Karim, MPs — Abu Abbas, Lutfulzaman Babar, Bani Ashraf, Director of Drug Administration, Prof Chowdhury Mahmudul Hasan, HOPES President Dr M Mosharraf Hossain, Registrar of Bangladesh Homeopathy Board, Prof Munshi Mohammad Ali and President of Bangladesh Homeopathy Medicine Manufacturers' Association, Dr MA Baten will attend the conference as special guests, said a press release Monday.

## District roundup

### PABNA

#### 'Uphold spirit of nationalism'

**Jan 12:** Shipping Minister M K Anwar underscored the need for upholding the spirit of Bangladeshi nationalism so that the people and the future generation would be inspired to work with patriotic zeal for building a happy and prosperous Bangladesh, reports UNB.

He was addressing a meeting organised by the Pabna district unit of Jatiyatabadi Gabs-shana Parishad at the local Banamali Institute as chief guest Tuesday, said an official hand-out.

Presided over by the Convenor of the parishad Advocate Taslim Hasan Suman, it was also addressed by the president of the parishad Ibrahim Rahman, district leaders of BNP and its front organisations.

The minister said the present government believes in the politics of development and prosperity adding that peace and discipline are the precondition of development. He called upon the people to strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Begum Khaleida Zia for keeping the present pace of development unhindered.

### CHUADANGA

#### Workshop on Scouts

**Jan 12:** A day-long workshop on Scouts was held here at Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) conference room Tuesday, says UNB.

Deputy Director of BRDB, Mosharraf Hossain was present at the workshop as the chief guest which was presided over by Nasiruddin.

A total of 20 managers and supervisors took part in the training. The workshop was addressed, among others, by Dulal Chandra Saha Apo of BRDB, Rahmat Ullah, Shaqur Rahman, Monirul Islam and Anjon Sarker.

### JAMALPUR

#### Patients suffer as druggists call strike

**Jan 12:** A good number of serious patients here faced acute problems due to the want of emergency medicines during the day-long country wide strike by the medicine shop owners on Monday, reports UNB.

On the day, all the drug shops of the district — both allopathic and homeopathic — remained closed at the call of the Bangladesh Chemist and Druggist Association.

The association gave the call to press home their demand for withdrawal of high fees including drug licence renewal fees, immediate issuance of new drug licence, increase of sales commission and training of pharmacists.

### SHERPUR

#### Clash over land leaves one killed, 11 injured

**Jan 12:** A man was killed and 11 people, including four women, were injured in Dhar-teghorta of Nakla thana following a clash over a land dispute between two rival groups on Saturday, reports UNB.

The victim, Sahbed Ali, was killed on the spot and his uncle, Badiuzzaman also died of heart failure when he heard the death news of Sahbed Ali.

Local people said, the clash ensued in the morning when one group tried to cultivate on the disputed land. It is learnt that the dispute over the 290 decimal land was going on for the last few months.

Seriously injured seven people were rushed to the Nakla hospital.

A case has been registered with the police.

### GAIBANDHA

#### Diarrhoea kills 21, attacks 300

**Jan 12:** Twenty-one persons died of diarrhoea and 300 others were attacked by the disease in Bobindaganj thana during the last five weeks, reports BSS.

When contacted, the health department sources confirmed that one person died out of 244 attacked by diarrhoea and four persons died of dysentery in the thana. Eighteen medical teams have been working in the affected areas.

The civil surgeon office has been taking measures as also asking people to take precautionary measures against diarrhoea.

### SATKHIRA

#### Dacoits kill young man

**Jan 12:** A gang of armed dacoits killed a young man of Kanpur village in Tala thana of the district while committing dacoity in his house on Sunday night, says UNB.

Witnesses said, the miscreants with deadly weapons raided the house of Nazrul Islam (30) and started looting valuables. On hearing hue and cry, the neighbours rushed to the spot. The dacoits then opened fire injuring Nazrul grievously and decamped with the booty.

Later Nazrul died on the way to Tala Hospital. The body was sent to morgue for autopsy.

### DINAJPUR

#### Many affected by diarrhoea

**Jan 12:** Diarrhoea has broken out in the town and its adjacent areas since beginning of the new year, creating panic among the people, says UNB.

A good number of people, including 13 children, have been admitted to the local hospitals and clinics.

According to doctors, scarcity of drinking water and consumption of adulterated food were the main reasons for the outbreak of the disease.

Local people have urged the authorities to despatch medical teams in the affected areas to combat the spread of the disease.

### RAJBARI

#### Tk 25.65 crore loan given to help poor

**Jan 12:** Grameen Bank of the district disbursed Taka 25.65 crore the destitute members of the three thanas during the last five years, reports UNB.

The bank disbursed the loan among 20,800 members of sadar, Baliakandi and Pangsha thanas. It also realised Taka 17.25 crore from the borrowers in the same period.

The loan was distributed for encouraging self-employment schemes among the destitute people. The loan would be used to buy cows, van rickshaws, set up poultry farms and handloom factories, construct houses and sanitary latrines and install tubewells.

The members so far have saved Taka 1.86 crore through these self-employment schemes, bank sources said.

### SIRAJGANJ

#### 30 injured in groups clash

**Jan 12:** Some 30 people were injured, three seriously, in a clash between the rival groups of Bahirghola and Natun Bhangabari area in the town Monday, says UNB.

Of the injured, rickshaw-puller Kalu (33) and two pedestrians Haidar (25) and Raihan (29) were admitted to sadar hospital with head and eye injuries.

Police said, the clash was the sequel to a Sunday's quarrel between two youths of the areas over volleyball tournament.

## "Govt committed to ensure balanced development"

**DAUDKANDI (Comilla), Jan 12:** The present government is committed to ensure a balanced development all over the country, Shipping Minister MK Anwar said here Saturday, reports UNB.

"Identify local problems and quickly place the same before the proper authority for solution," he told a public meeting at Kanaingar of Daudkandi thana Saturday.

The government was carrying forward with a number of socio-economic development related projects for ameliorating the sufferings of the people, the minister informed.

## Govt trying hard to build national culture

**MYMENSINGH, Jan 12:** The government has been trying relentlessly to build the national culture on a strong foundation by coordinating the cultural activities of all areas of the country, reports UNB.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs, Prof Jahan-Ara Begum said this Saturday during her visit to some tribal and non-tribal areas of Valuka and Trishal thanas.

She was leading a team of the parliamentary standing committee on cultural affairs. The committee was informed that a large number of tribals — the Gaos and the Kunchs are living in these areas.

Members of the committee — Amanullah Chowdhury, Shamsun Nahar Ahmed, Nur-e-Alam Chowdhury and Abul Lais Mohammad Mubin Chowdhury, and Cultural Secretary, Islamuddin Malik were present there.

**SYLHET, Jan 12:** The contribution of Hason Raja has enriched our cultural heritage.

Fishery and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman said this while he was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session of the week-long Hason Folk Festival arranged on the occasion of the birth anniversary of mystic poet, Hason Raja.

The minister assured cooperation in establishing the proposed Hason Academy with a view to carrying on research on life and works of Hason Raja, Radha Ramon, Akrun Shah, Shitalong Shah and other mystic poets and folk artists of the region.

The inaugural function was presided over by Mohammad Kamal Uddin, DC, Sunamganj and it was addressed by Nazir Ahmed MP, Prasun Kanti Roy, ex-MP, Dr Ashraf Siddique, Dr Momen Chowdhury, Dr Kh. Riazul Huq, Fakruzzaman Babar, Ahmed Chowdhury.

Dewan Mominul Mojuddin, Pourashava Chairman and Member-secretary of festival committee read out the address of welcome. He expressed that he would soon donate two acres of land for

## Tk 4.13 cr for pisciculture uplift

**PATUAKHALI, Jan 12:** Different commercial banks have taken up a programme to distribute Taka 4.13 crore for development of pisciculture in the district during the current financial year, says UNB.

According to official sources, Taka 1.4 crore will be distributed by Sonali Bank, Taka 0.47 crore by Agrani Bank, 0.15 crore by Rupali Bank, Taka 12.50 lakh by Janata Bank and Taka 2.35 crore by the Bangladesh Krishi Bank.

According to another report, Water Development Board has taken up a scheme to construct an embankment in Galachipa thana in the current fiscal year.

It is learnt that Taka 2.50 crore will be spent for construction of the embankment. About 7000 hectares of land will be saved from flash flood and salinity after construction of the embankment, which will be completed by June next.

**109 projects under FWP**  
At least 109 projects under Food for Works Programme will be implemented in six thanas of

the district in the current dry season, official sources said.

Thana wise break-up of the projects is as follows: sadar-29, Bauphal-15, Galachipa-28, Kalapara-12, Dasmina-11, and Mirjaganj-14.

The uplift projects include excavation and re-excavation of canals, construction of embankments and maintenance of rural kutcha roads.

With the completion of the projects, rural communication and irrigation system in the district will be improved to a great extent.

## Tk 2 crore for 5 cyclone shelters

Construction of five cyclone shelters in the coastal areas of Kalapara thana will be completed by June this year, reports UNB.

These cyclone shelters are being constructed under a package of seven projects run by 'Karitas', an NGO at a cost of Taka two crore. It also includes construction of two primary schools in the thana.

According to the officials, the cyclone shelters would be able

to accommodate 2,000 people while more than 1,000 children will get education in these schools.

## Goods worth Tk 2 lakh looted

A BSS report says: A dacoity was committed at village Char Gorbidi of Muradai union under Dumki police station of this district recently.

Four persons were injured by gun fire. The dacoits opened fire as the villagers surrounded them while retreating. During the dacoity, the inmates of the house were beaten and dealt blows with lethal weapons. The inmates of the house received injuries.

It is reported that the dacoits, numbering 15 to 16 armed with deadly weapons, broke open the house of one Abdul Gani Sikdar at midnight. They beat Abdul Gani Sikdar and Ramjan Ali Sikdar.

The dacoits escaped with gold ornaments and other valuables worth about Taka one lakh.

A case has been registered with the Dumki police station.

## Help achieve "edn for all by 2000"

**KAPASIA (Gazipur), Jan 12:** Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah urged the people irrespective of party affiliation to supplement government's efforts to make the programme of 'education for all by the year 2000' a success, reports BSS.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a discussion meeting at Kapasia thana auditorium of Gazipur district in observance of the "national education week 94".

The function was addressed among others, by the Superintendent of Kiritari Senior Madrasah Borhanuddin Ahmed, former MP Dr Sanaullah and M Shahidullah.

Referring to the highest allocation in education sector by the government, the minister said, 'Food for Education Programme' initiated by the government will also be considered as a milestone towards achieving the goal of the education for all by the year 2000.

## Young man hacked to death

**KHULNA, Jan 12:** A young man was hacked to death at a village in Fultala thana of the district in the early hours of Monday, reports UNB.

Police suspected that the miscreants brought him there from his house and killed him.

The 'Food for Education Programme' has become model for other countries of the world, he said.

In observance of the education week '94' in Kapasia thana, students of all the educational institutions took part in various sport and cultural programmes.

The thana education committee also organised survey school age group children in the thana.

Later, the minister distributed awards and certificates among the best teachers, educational institutions and students of Kapasia thana.

## Contributions of Hason Raja recalled

From Iqbal Siddiquee

### Hason Academy

The week-long Festival ended at Sunamganj town Friday last amidst great enthusiasm and participation of people from all walks of life. Thousands of people attended the programmes. The town wore a festive look during the last few weeks with multi-coloured posters, fastoons and other decorations.

The gorgeous festival arranged for the third time began from January 1. A week-long fair was also held in front of the Government Jubilee High School. The Deputy Commissioner and President of Festival Committee formally inaugurated it. A total of 33 stalls were set up by different government departments, local welfare organisations and individuals. Handicrafts, pottery goods, books and other materials were put on display at the fair.

The main programmes of the festival began from January 4.

On the opening day a cul-

tural function. Ankhi Munja Dekho Rup Rey' was held where regional songs were rendered by Biplob Bhat-tacharya, Nikhil Purkayastha, Chandana Roy, Tulika Ghosh Chowdhury, Mohsin Khan, Barnali Das, Aloke Chakravarty Bappa, Shabbir Ahmed Sohel and Kohinoor Begum.

Local artists rendered mystic songs at the function, 'Darbar-E-Ashique'. Sarder Ashraf, Mridul Chakravarty, Sonia Rajjaque, Abdur Rahman Bayati rendered songs as guest artists.

Poet Shamsur Rahman attended the second days' discussion meeting as chief guest. Presided over by Hassan Shahriar, President, Jatiya Press Club, it was also addressed among others by Dr Humayun Ahmed, Dr Shafulud-din Ahmed, Saleh Chowdhury, Hassan Haffi and Raoshan Sadia Chowdhury. Abu Ali Sajjad Hossain read out the main paper.

The speakers stressed the

need for immediate steps for collecting the missing songs of Hason Raja and other folk talents.

In the second session, a number of regional songs were rendered, at the function, 'Bhramar Kotoy Gai'. Mystic songs were rendered at the function 'Darbar-E-Ashique'. Mayia Kumar Ganguli, Selim Chowdhury and Sayeed Bayati and his group were the guest artists. Baul songs were presented by the groups of Abdul Hamid and Lal Miah.

On the third day, Textile Secretary AHM Mofazzal Karim attended the discussion meeting as chief guest. It was also addressed among others by Saleh Chowdhury, Dr Shamsuzzaman Khan, Mohammad Sadique, Luthfur Rahman Riton while Md Kamaluddin DC presided over.

The speakers called upon the authorities for naming some of the roads and institu-

tions after the illustrious sons like Hason Raja.

They also called for opening folklore department in the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology.

After the discussion meeting, poems were read out by AHM Mofazzal Karim, Mohammad Sadique, Kishwar-Ibne-Dilwar, Luthfur Rahman Riton, Mutasim Ali, Iqbal Ahmed Kanji.

In the second session, local artists presented songs. Mystic songs were also rendered. In the function of guest artists, songs were rendered by Aroji Dhar, Jamaluddin Hassan Banna, Main Shah and his group. Baul songs were also presented at the last session on the day.

On the concluding day, the discussion meeting was presided over by veteran politician Prasun Kanti Roy (Barun Roy) ex-MP, while it was also addressed among others by Suranjit Sengupta MP, Nazir Hossain MP, Abdul

Majid MP, Jatiya Press Club President Hassan Shahriar, JSD President Hasanul Haque Inu, Mainuddin Khan Badal, TV producer and writer Ali Imam, Poet Assad Chowdhury, Mush-taque Qureshi, Golam Rabbani, Humayun Kabir, Mattur Rahman, DC Md Kamaluddin and Chairman Pourashava and Member Secretary of the committee Dewan Mominul Moudjin.

Former Minister Dewan Farid Gazi attended it as chief guest. He also distributed prizes among the winners of different competitions arranged in connection with the festival.

On the concluding day's cultural function 'Rup Dekhilam Re Nayoney' regional songs were rendered by the local artists. Mystic songs were rendered by a group of local artist at the function Darbar-E-Ashique. The guest artists also rendered songs of different kinds. The functions ended with baul songs.

This year's festival attracted large number of people from all walks of life who enjoyed the function from afternoon to late night.



HASON FOLK FESTIVAL. A performance of the child artistes (L), Hason Raja (M), the audience at function of the festival (R).