

## National

# 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 Kazipur, Kamarkanda, Belukuchi 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 Shahjadpur, Ullapara and Raigang 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 2 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 kheshari and dhuncha.

Cow-dung is now widely used as fuel after turning it to 'Ghute' in the village areas. Dried 'dhuncha' plants are also

used as fuel. Kheshari-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 hectare 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 experts or the representatives of the producers of pesticides and fertilizers.

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

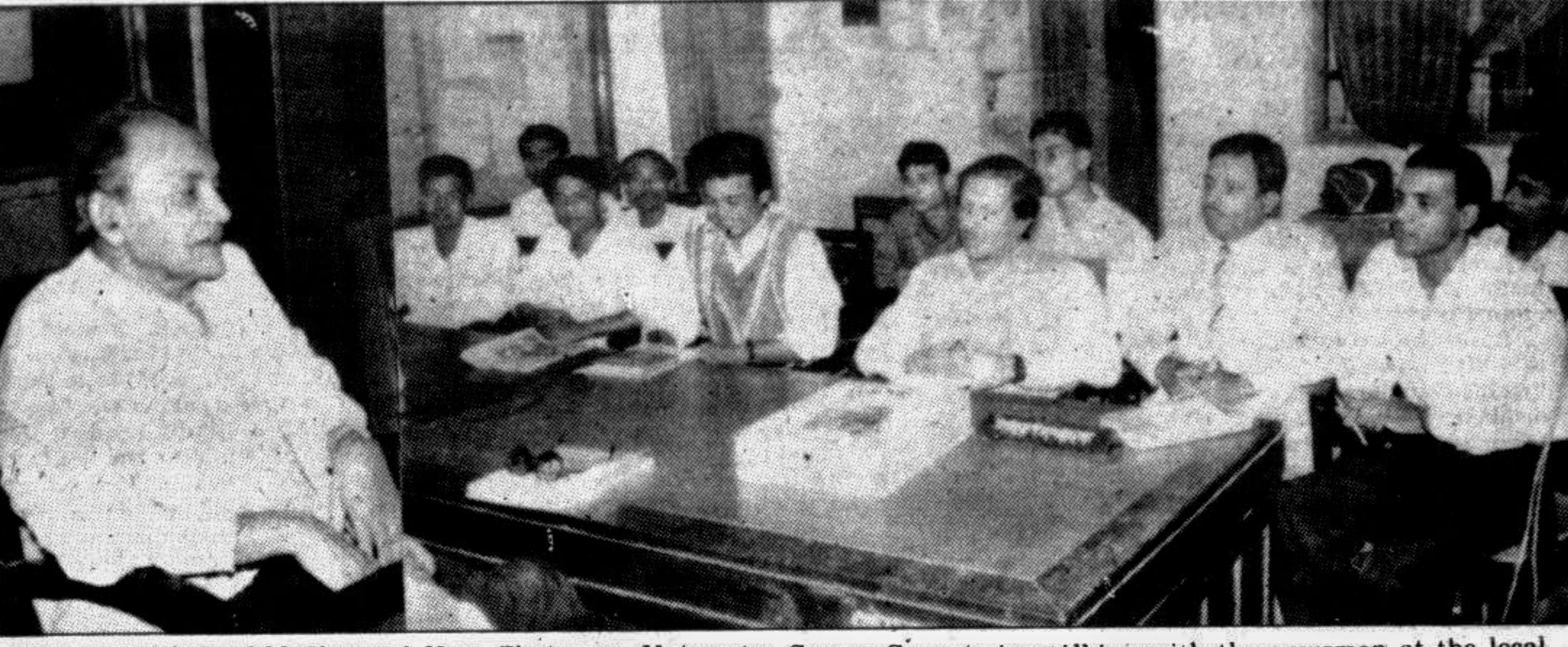
According to a source of agricultural research authority, 50 lakh hectares of land in 16 northern districts, it is expressed by agricultural experts.

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 are suffering 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.

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

— Star photo

## Govt believes in free flow of information

BRAHMANBARIA, Jan 12: Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda was 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 Datya Para at the

town with financial assistance from the French government. The 120-foot 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, Abdus Sattar Bhuiya MP, A K M Salamatullah, Director General of Bangladesh Television, Hamidul Haque Tuku, General Secretary of Brahmanbaria district BNP, Sheikh Muhammad Habibullah, Convener 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 BSS.

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

A case has been registered with the Dumki police station.

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

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 kutchu 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, Lutfuzzaman 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.

CHUADANGA

## District roundup

### 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 BSS.

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.

A case was lodged with the police.

### 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 BSS.

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 BSS.

The bank disbursed the loan among 20,800 members of sadar, Baliajandi 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 Bhangbari area in the town Monday, says BSS.

Of the injured, rickshaw-puller Kalu (33) and two pedestrians Haidar (25) and Rajhan (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.

## 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 BSS.

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.

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

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

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.

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 Krirati Senior Madrasa Borhanuddin Ahmed, former MP Dr Sanaujul Islam and M Shahidullah.

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

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

Referring to the highest allocation in education sector by the government, the minister said, '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.

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

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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 BSS.

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.

On the concluding day's cultural function 'Rup Dekhnil Re Nayone' regional songs were rendered by the local artistes. Mystic songs were rendered by a group of local artistes at the function Darbar-E-Ashique. Maiya Kumar Ganguli, Selim Chowdhury and Sayeed Bayati and his group were the guest artistes. Baul songs were presented by the groups of Abdul Hamid and Lal Miah.

In the second session, local artistes presented songs. Mystic songs were also rendered. In the function of guest artistes, songs were rendered by Aroti Dhar, Jamaluddin Hasan 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