

Farakka effect Crops worth Tk 1000 crore not produced

KUSHTIA, May 31: Crops worth about Tk 1000 crore could not be produced in the last two Kharif seasons in the Ganges-Kobadak project area due to adverse effect of Farakka, reports UNB.

This was revealed at a workshop on "Water Problems of Ganges-Kobadak Project" organised by Gano Unnayan Granthagar, a leading NGO of the country, here on May 28.

The Deputy Commissioner of the district Nazul Islam attended the workshop as chief guest and the key note paper was presented by Prof Nazul Islam Chowdhury with Muiyuddin Ahmad, secretary of the organisation, in the chair.

It was informed at the workshop that due to the unilateral withdrawal of Ganges water through Farakka barrage by India, the Padma, the only source of water of G-K project has been dried up. As a result during the last two Kharif seasons there was no cultivation in the vast tract of land in the project area and the loss in terms of crops in each season was estimated at Tk 500 crore.

The workshop emphasised the need for evolving alternate measures for sustenance of the project and protection of ecological balance. They suggested better management of water during the lean period and sinking of deep tubewells for cultivation of crops.

Local officials, NGO representatives, journalists and elites of the town attended the workshop.

Tk 1.5 lakh looted, five injured

MAGURA, May 31: Five local traders were injured and cash Tk 1.50 lakh was looted by some miscreants in a highway robbery near Durannagar of Sreepur thana of WAPDA-Lagolbond road, reports UNB.

Witnesses said a gang of armed miscreants robbed the cash from the 10 traders by blocking the road while they were returning from Ramnagar cattle market at night by two auto-rickshaws last week.

The muggers also beat the traders mercilessly injuring five of them. The three seriously injured were rushed to the Dairapur Hospital.

Highway robbery is on rise day by day in certain areas of the district creating panic among the people.

Local people urged the authorities to take immediate steps to prevent road dacoity.

Another report says: At least 41,000 metric tons of cotton seeds worth about Tk 85.69 crore have been produced in Jessore region during the current fiscal.

Bangladesh Cotton Development Board (BCDB), Jessore zone sources said 40,864 hectares of land in Magura, Jhenidah, Jessore, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur and Satkhira districts had been brought under cotton cultivation programme.

High yielding variety seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and cash as loan were disbursed by the BCDB among the farmers for the successful implementation of the programme.

Sirajganj Quami Jute Mills incurs Tk 1cr loss a month

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, May 31: The Sirajganj Quami Jute Mills, the biggest industrial enterprise of the northern region incurs loss amounting to Tk one crore every month. In last 10 years the loss have amounted to Tk 120 crores.

It is gathered that the Quami Jute Mills was established in mid 60s at Raipur, about four kilometer away from Sirajganj town. The produces of the mills, have great demand in the foreign markets but due to higher cost of production, the goods can not compete with the products of other exporting countries.

A source of the mills told that production cost of one ton Hessian amounts to Tk 38,766 and sold at Tk 21 thousand. Seeking of Tk 27,330 in sold at Tk 15 thousand and CBC of

Tk 40,354 per ton is sold at Tk 24 thousand. At present seven tons of various items are produced in the mills which are sold in foreign markets even after recurring loss. The produces are not sold in home markets as there is no demand. Due to the reason everyday loss stands at Tk 3 lakh 50 thousand.

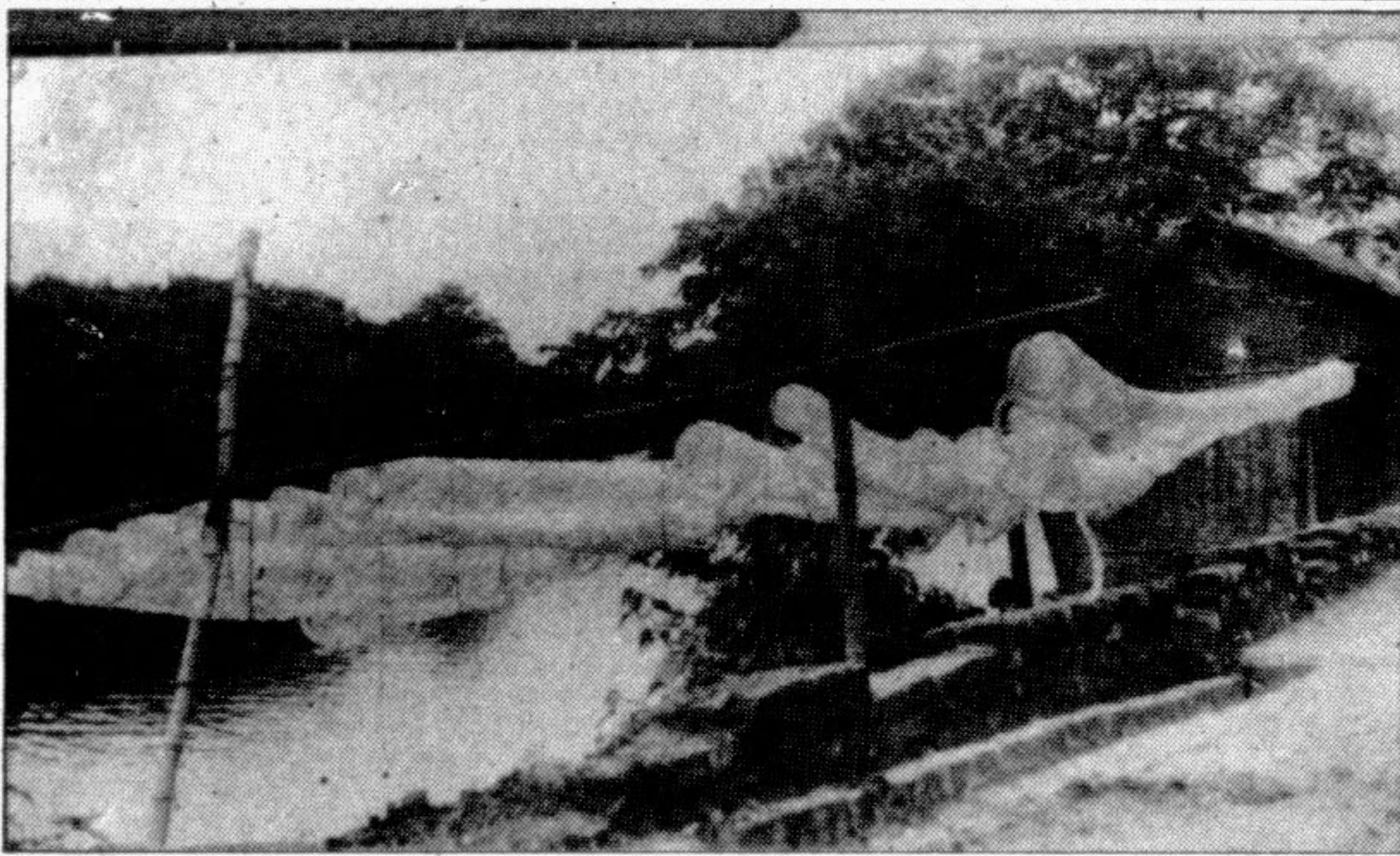
In the current year, the amount of loss will increase due to complexity in purchasing raw jute. Raw jute was no purchased at a lower rate during the harvesting season. The mills authority started lucky purchase of raw jute after raising the rate in local markets.

The Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) paid Tk seven crore to the mills to purchase raw jute. But unusual

and mysterious delay in purchasing jute adds new amount to loss. Purchasing of jute from distant points including Bhangura, Domar and Jamalpur agencies, carrying cost have increased to Tk 40/50 per mound.

Besides, a considerable amount have been spent for the employees and workers illegally. Some CBA leaders have taken abnormal and unusual T A and D A even 50/60 times in a year. While contacted, a source, unwilling to be disclosed, told this correspondent that all such irregularities were done under heavy pressure.

The knowledgeable sources have opined thorough investigation into the matters to make the prospective jute mills a profitable concern.



COMILLA: Parts of animal abdomen are being dried up in front of Comilla slaughter house polluting the environment. — Star photo

Schools in Barguna beset with various problems

From Our Correspondent

BARGUNA, May 31: The average standard of secondary education in Barguna district has deteriorated. There are about 100 non-government high schools in all the five thanas of the district, but these schools are beset with innumerable problems hampering education of about 30 thousand students.

According to survey, qualified persons do not take up teaching at the non-government secondary schools as salary of teachers in schools is meager. Besides, a good number of schools of the district are unable to pay 25 percent salary of teachers due fund constraint.

Moreover there is a government ban to increase tuition fees of the students whereas the institutions have no other source of income. Teachers with no proper qualifications have been engaged in the non-government high schools.

The private coaching has become rampant throughout the district. The teachers are so much engaged with their private coaching, that they can hardly give full attention to their students in the classes.

The schools do not have their own syllabus. Besides

question papers are not made by the institutions. Erroneous question papers are brought from various commercial question sellers at cheap rate while the examination fees is collected from the students at a very high rate, guardians alleged.

Classes are not held during the first three four months of the academic year on the excuse of non-availability of the government approved book list. Mostly books are not available in the markets even after receiving the book list.

Besides, classes remain suspended for about 20-25 days in almost all the schools of the district as the schools are used for SSC examination centres. And this affect the students badly. These schools also remain closed for Ramzan vacation. For this reason the first terminal examination is held practically without completing even one fourth portion of the syllabus. It is observed that only 15 to 20 percent of the student pass in all subjects and the rest are promoted to the next, classes without getting pass marks in three to four subjects.

Homework is not given to the students. It seems that is out of practice at present,

merit is not judged at the time of admission of the students in the different classes, specially in those schools where enrollment has fallen remarkably. The practical classes in the science laboratories are held nominally and practical work are not performed properly. The class routines which is made for the whole year is not sufficient complete the total syllabus. Specially the syllabus of first terminal examination cannot be completed properly. Besides class routines are not made on the basis of recognised principles.

The authority in most of the schools, fails to ensure to regular attendance of the students in the schools. They are found completely reluctant regarding this important matter.

A few schools have library but these are not functioning well. Library fees are collected as usual but books are not distributed among the students regularly.

Guardians are afraid that if the concerned authority does not take any necessary action to solve these problems and do not mitigate students sufferings immediately, the average standard of secondary education in Barguna district will be badly affected.

Tk 4 cr telephone bills unpaid in Barisal

BARISAL, May 31: More than Tk 4 crore telephone bills have been lying outstanding in eleven southern districts under Barisal telecommunication zone, reports UNB.

According to Barisal T&T and Revenue office sources, of the total bills, about Tk 1.75 crore remained outstanding with the semi-government offices while Tk 2.50 crore with the private sector consumers.

Besides, Tk 1.20 crore remained outstanding against about one thousand closed telephones in the zone.

There are about 11,000 telephone consumers in the zone, the Revenue office sources said.

Another reports say: The operation of the private sector short take-off and landing (STOL) service is likely to be delayed by more than two months due to rain and other problems.

Most of the licence holder companies seem to be reluctant in starting the STOL services between Dhaka and Barisal, Comilla, Lalmonirhat, Shamshearnagar, Thakurgaon and Ishurdi.

According to Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), meantime, six private airlines were given provisional licence to operate STOL services. These private airlines are: Falcon Aviation Ltd, Borak Air, Green Air, Parabat Air Ltd., Royal Bengal Airlines and South Asian Airlines.

In Barisal, the airport at Rahmatpur, about 12 kilometres from the town, is now ready for operation of STOL services.

Meanwhile, civil aviation authority has constructed 2,600 ft long and 100 ft wide runway. This runway is expected to be extended upto 3,000 ft within this year.

Trees uprooted in recent cyclone

Govt can fetch Tk 200 crore selling Segun, Mehgani timber

SREEPUR (Gazipur), May 31: The government will be able to earn Taka 200 crore by selling the timber of Segun and Mehgani trees uprooted by the recent cyclone in Cox's Bazar district. Forest and Environment Minister Akbar Hossain said here, reports BSS.

He said Taka 30 crore would be required to collect these trees from the difficult hilly terrain by manual labour and the money spent would be earned by the people living there. He said, in Teknaf alone 2600 people were working daily in collecting and carrying these trees to the nearest transport point.

The minister was speaking at a grass root level workshop as the chief guest organised jointly by the ministry of environment, UNDP and ADAB at Prashika Manik Unnayan Kendra at Sreepur in finalisation of the National Environment Management Action Plan (NEMAP).

He said, the government had already taken steps to involve the people in tree plantation as tree gives high economic benefit to the people while protecting the environment.

The workshop was the last of 23 such workshops held at different places of the country where local people representing different strata, professions and sex participated.

Output of the workshops would be incorporated in the NEMAP.

In the second phase of the exercise five divisional level workshops would be held where participants from the grass root level workshops would take part. In the third phase workshops would be held in Dhaka to involve different professionals, intellectuals and the activists which would be followed by a national workshop expected to be held in the last week of June.

Akbar Hossain said there are about 50,000 deer grazing on one lakh acres of forest land in the Sundarbans. He said if the population of the deer could be increased to several lakhs by some scientific method then some of the deer could be used by the people for meat every year to maintain a balance between the deer population and the food available for them.

Pointing to the failure of the Environment Ministry in effecting the ban on use of polythene bags the minister said plastic was the worst waste in the world affecting the environment.

He said to serve the interest of 1000 to 1500 businessmen lakhs of poor farmer who cultivate jute has to bear the cost as polythene bags were being used as substitute to jute bags.

Fruit bearing trees face extinction

KUSHTIA, May 31: Fruit bearing trees in all the 12 thanas of the greater Kushtia district are on the verge of extinction, due to large-scale felling.

According to a report, the districts were famous for different kinds of fruits such as jack fruit, lichi, mango, palm, guava, amloki and pineapple.

These fruit grew abundantly. The people of the district never faced the scarcity of various kinds of fruits which were available in all the hats and bazars.

People used to eat huge fruits which were the main source of nutrition needed for health. Now fruits are not available abundantly.

The economic conditions of the people of Kushtia district is rapidly deteriorating due to inflation, natural disasters, withdrawal of subsidies from many agricultural inputs and high birth rate.

Many poverty-stricken people are compelled to sell their fruit bearing trees to a section of traders. These trees are being used as fire-wood and house building materials.

Due to the indiscriminate felling of the fruit bearing trees, an acute crisis of fruit has been prevailing every where.

Besides, the ecological balance is being hampered day by day.

The people of the district cannot enjoy the taste of various fruit as before. They are being deprived of necessary nutrition which comes from fruit. For this reason, their health is being affected to a great extent. The number of malnourished people is increasing.

The scarcity of amloki has hit the old people who need it most because they generally eat rice and other food after mixing it with them when they lose taste for food.

District roundup

BARISAL

4 card phone cells to be installed

May 31: Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board will install 4 ISD card phone booths in Barisal and Patuakhali districts soon, reports UNB.

Official sources said the Japanese government is providing financial assistance for installation of the booths.

Necessary equipment have already reached the sites for installation of the card phones, the sources said.

Meanwhile, work on installation of a new relay station of Radio Bangladesh here is going on in full swing.

The 10 kw medium wave relay station is being set up at Rupatali, three kilometre off the town, with a cost of Tk 18.65 crore including Tk 6.5 crore foreign exchange components.

Officials said, Taka one crore has already been sanctioned for acquisition and compensation of land in the site including earth filling works during the current fiscal year.

The project is expected to be completed by 1995-96 fiscal.

SAVAR

Minister seeks western nations' help to solve Farakka issue

May 31: Environment and Forest Minister Akbar Hossain said the unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water at Farakka and the industrial pollution are largely threatening the environment of the country, says UNB.

The minister was addressing the closing session of the Workshop on 'Communicating Environmental Risks: Environmental Education as a tool for Environmental Disaster Management'.

The workshop was organised by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) at the Senate hall of Jahangir Nagar University on Monday.

Akbar Hossain underscored the need for dissemination of technical knowledge to combat the environmental risks.

He urged upon the developed states to help materialise the expectations of the developing world in matters of technical and financial assistance.

The minister said, environment is a global matter and urged all concerned to put united efforts for protecting the environment.

Presided over by Prof Amir Hossain Khan of JU the workshop was addressed, among others, by Abul Hossain, Vice-Chancellor of JU, Dr Walter L Filho of Bradford University of UK and Dr HL Potter, Representative of ODA in Bangladesh.

JAMALPUR

Decision to sell BJC godown protested

May 31: Jute employees have called for a dawn-to-dusk hartal at Sharishabari thana Tuesday demanding withdrawal of the decision to sell BJC godowns by auction, reports UNB.

Authorities have decided to put the local godowns of now defunct Bangladesh Jute Corporation at auction on June 6.

The hartal caller — Sharishabari Thana Jute Employees Rehabilitation Action Committee — also demands the rehabilitation of 22,000 workers of the organisation.

All political parties, including BNP and Awami League, have extended support to the hartal call.

BAGERHAT

Three killed by tigers

May 31: Three people were killed by tigers in Sharankhola range of Sundarban mangrove forest in the district in last 24 hours, witnesses said Monday, reports UMB.

They said, Kabir (18) of Sharankhola thana fell prey to tigers when they were catching fry in Kolantet and Nandanbaki canals Monday morning.

Family sources said, Babul 27 of Pirojpur and Abdus Sattar 48 of Sharankhola thana were killed by the tigers when they went to chop trees in the forest on Sunday.

The bodies of the victims were recovered by their associates.

PABNA

Young boy stabbed to death

May 31: A minor boy was stabbed to death at Joyranga village in Iswardi thana Monday morning out of vengeance allegedly by those at enmity with his father, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Belal Hossain, 8, son of Khoda Box.

Family sources said, Khoda Box bought a lichi tree from Khorshed Ali of the same village some months ago for Taka 1000. But at present, during the lichi season, Khorshed is demanding an additional Taka 2000 as price of the fruit tree. Box refused.

They alleged Belal was kidnapped at 7 am on way to their shop and stabbed indiscriminately.

Police sent the body to sadar hospital for autopsy. A case has been filed with Iswardi thana.

MYMENSINGH

Massive boro cultivation scheme

May 31: A total of 4,92,243 hectares of land have been brought under boro cultivation in five districts of greater Mymensingh during the current season, reports BSS.

The districts are, Mymensingh, Netorakona, Kishoreganj, Jamalpur and Sherpur.

Of the total 4,17,804 hectares of land have been brought under High Yielding Variety and he rest under local variety.

According to the official source about 18 lakh metric tons of boro are expected to be yielded this year.

Besides, 61845 hectares of land have been brought under wheat cultivation in the greater Mymensingh district in the current season.

SATKHIRA

Rice worth Tk one crore damaged

May 31: About 600 metric tons of rice worth about Tk one crore stored at ten food godowns of the district were totally damaged, reports UNB.

The rice stored for a long time in the government godowns was destroyed allegedly due to lack of maintenance and proper care. And it could not be sold in the open market as the price in the market was less than the government fixed price.

Local officials said, they had informed the matter to the higher authority time to time about the open market price structure but they did not get any suggestion regarding the matter.

They are now trying to sell the damaged rice in the market but it is learnt that people are not willing to buy the same.

Glorious roles of Shaheed Zia recalled

RAJSHAHI, May 31: The 13th death anniversary of Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman was observed here Monday in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Rajshahi district and city units and its front organisation chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

The highlights of the day's programme included hoisting of black flag and party flag at half-mast at the party's office at Sonadighir Mor and playing of speeches of Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman at different important points of the city. Quran Khwani, milad mahfil and special prayers for the eternal peace of the departed soul of Shaheed president Zia was held at the party office.

Rajshahi district and city units of BNP jointly organised a discussion on the life and work of Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman at the party office in the afternoon with Mizanur Rahman Minu, Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation and Assistant Organising Secretary of BNP, Rajshahi Division, in the chair.

Mokshed Ahmed, former MP, Advocate Jane Alam and Rafiqul Alam Tunu among others spoke on the occasion.

Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal also arranged a discussion meeting on the occasion. Mirzanur Rahman Minu attended the function as the chief guest.

Moinuddin Ahmed Manik, former MP and Dr Anwar Hossain among others spoke. Jatiyatabadi Samik Dal also held a discussion on the day at the party office the same day.

Speakers at the discussions said that Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman worked for the welfare of the people and he (President Zia) was a firm believer of democracy. They said that president Zia had enhanced the country's prestige and image in the country of nations through hard work. They also urged all to extend their support and cooperation to the present government.

KHULNA

The 13th death anniversary of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman and founder of BNP was observed here Monday with a call for renewed pledge to implement his ideals and 19-point programme.

The day-long programmes were taken up by various social, political and cultural organisations in observance of the day in a befitting manner. To mark the day, BNP and its front organisations had taken elaborate programmes which included hoisting of national flags at half-mast atop BNP offices, Quran Khwani, milad and doa mahfil.

BARISAL

The 13th death anniversary of the founding chairman of

BNP shaheed president Ziaur Rahman was observed in this divisional town and other parts of the district with due respect.

Barisal district unit of BNP and its front organisations took up elaborate programmes to mark the day.

The programmes included the hoisting of the national and black flags at half mast at the party office in the morning. Party leaders and workers led a procession from Aswini Kumar Town Hall to the central Shaheed Minar and laid the floral wreaths at the foot of the Shaheed Minar. As a part of the programmes, milad mahfil and Quran Khwani were also held.

A discussion on the life and works of Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman was held at the Aswini Kumar town hall premises to mark the day. Presided over by Ahasan Habib Kamal, administrator of Barisal pourashava. The discussion was addressed, among others, by Mujibur Rahman Sarwar MP and Principal Abdur Rashid Khan, president of Barisal district BNP.

Speakers at the discussion paying tributes to the late leader said, the role of Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman would remain forever in the history of Bangladesh for introducing the Bangladeshi nationalism and multi-party politics discarding the one

party rule in the country. They also lauded Shaheed Zia for practising the politics of production for the welfare of the toiling masses.

NARAYANGANJ

Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman showed the nation the right paths during the hours of crisis and had a dream of establishing Bangladesh as a prestigious and prosperous nation in the world. Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury said Monday.

With this objective in view, he created a trend of development oriented activities in the country, but the anti-development forces conspired against him and assassinated him, Chowdhury observed.

The home minister was speaking at public meetings arranged at Tarabo, Kayetpara, Murapara, Daudpur, Bholajbo, Kanchan Golakandial, Bhulta and Rugganj unions under Narayanganj district.

The minister said, to materialise the dreams of Shaheed Zia the present government has been carrying out development activities for the betterment of the common people.

FENI

The local Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) arranged a discussion meeting, milad mahfil and rally at its office Monday in observance of the 13th death anniversary of

Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman

The rally paraded the main thoroughfares of the town.

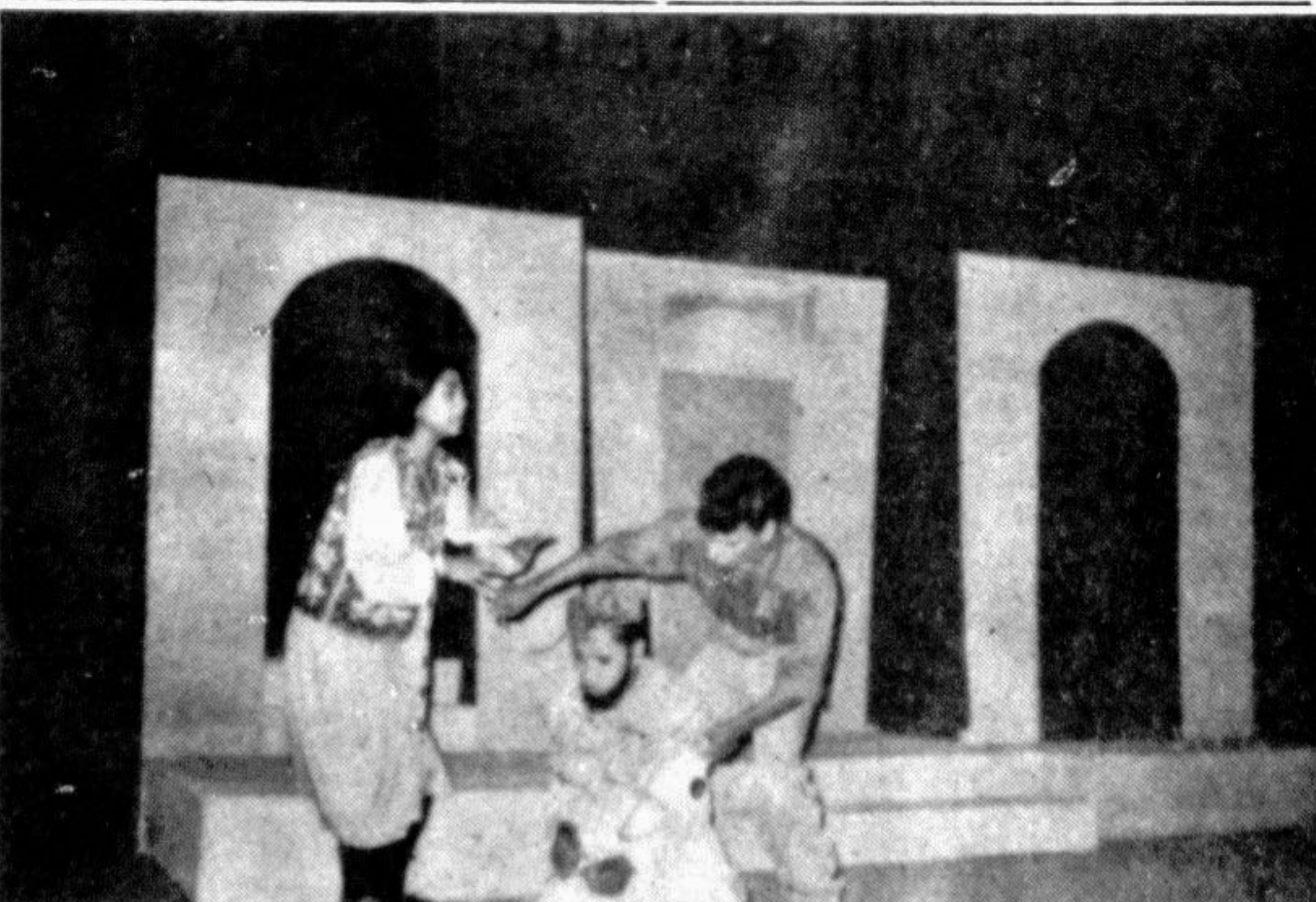
The discussion meeting was addressed by Mahbulul Alam Tara, whip of parliament as the chief guest. He recalled with gratitude the contributions made by Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman towards the socio-economic development of the country and his bold steps to establish multi-party democracy and the freedom of press.

GAZIPUR

UNB adds: Deputy leader of the Parliament Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said late president Ziaur Rahman declared independence of the country from Kalurghat in Chittagong in 1971.

He was speaking as chief guest at a function in observance of the 13th death anniversary of the shaheed President Ziaur Rahman organised by the district unit of BNP on Monday. Prof Badruddoza said President Zia introduced multi-party politics in Bangladesh, said an official handout.

State Minister for Science and Technology Prof M A Mannan paying rich tributes to the late president described him as the dearest leader of the people and a great architect of the nation.



BARISAL: A scene of the stage drama 'Tinnee Mukhtida' staged by Saldabadi Group Theatre of Barisal. — Star photo