

Outlawed party activities intensify in Jessore, Jhenidah, Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Sept 3: The outlawed party activities have been intensified in the districts of Jessore, Jhenidah and Chuadanga over the past two years.

Police have arrested twenty people so far from different places of Jessore district for their alleged involvement in the killing of a police constable and snatching away three rifles from a contingent of police during their patrol at Charavita Bazar of Bagherpara thana in the district recently, said a source.

Of the arrested, three have been taken into custody and the rest have been produced before the court.

Police launched, following the incident, a swift hunt to track the miscreants and recovered the arms.

Sources said, a group of miscreants overpowered the patrol police. They shot at a constable, Sirajul Islam and snatched away two rifles and a SMG rifle with five cartridges of bullets.

In November, 1992, a group of miscreants looted away two rifles in a similar action from a police patrol party at Bablatala near Jessore town. A few days later two more rifles were snatched away by miscreants from Ansar guards at Jessore Picnic Corner on Jessore-Khulna highway while they

were patrolling in Chaklader Paribahan. The rifles, however, were returned under political pressure.

Reports received here say Tala thana in Satkhira, Dumuria in Khulna and Keshabpur in Jessore are now under control of outlawed party activists. The areas have turned into inferno. Anarchy and disorder are reigning in these places.

Police come on patrol during day time to track the miscreants and innocent law abiding people are harassed, it is alleged.

During the night, the situation changes. The inhabitants are ruthlessly kept hostage by them.

According to another source, during the last seven

months ending July, a total of 17 persons were killed by this outlawed party activists in the area without any protest from any corner.

Similar is the report from Kaliganj, Kotchandpur, Harinakundu, Sailakupa of Jhenidah district, Magura sadar and Salikha thanas of Magura district and Chuadanga sadar and Damurhuda thanas of Chuadanga district.

When contacted, a number of leaders of the areas, told The Daily Star that general public are passing days in complete insecurity. They also expressed that police maintain network of intelligence services all over these districts to keep eye on the movements of those party activists.

Jamuna erosion

400 homeless in Pabna

PABNA, Sept 3: As Jamuna continued to rise further, erosion has intensified in eight villages of Bera thana rendering some 400 people homeless, reports UNB.

Official sources confirmed the erosion in the region. Local people alleged that no relief material has yet been reached at the affected areas.

The affected villages are Nakalia, Nayanpur, Bijoyganj, Raghunathpur, Purnanbaring, Khanpura, Madhupur and Nagarbari.

Crops on 3000 acres of land and 400 kutcha houses were damaged during the period. Bera Irrigation Pump Station and Nagarbari Ferry ghāt were also threatened due to the erosion.

Some 2000 people were homeless during last 7 days in the areas. Most of them have taken shelter on the flood control embankment.

5 missing as boat capsizes in Jamuna

MANIKGANJ, Sept 3: Five cattle traders were missing after a mechanised boat, bound for Aricha, capsized in the Jamuna river at Dhalarchar here on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said, the boat carrying 145 heads of cattle and 15 traders from Fulbari in Kushtia district sank about 9 am.

Fishermen rescued 10 traders from the river.

3 electrocuted in Manikganj

MANIKGANJ, Sept 3: Three people including two women were electrocuted in Sadar and Singar thanas of the district in two separate incidents recently, reports UNB.

Anwara Begum (45) and Lalmia (29) of Singar thana suddenly came in contact with a live electric wire while they went to cut bamboo. They died instantly.

In another incident, a maid servant in Moigan village in Sadar thana was electrocuted while she was cooking in an electric heater.

Separate cases were filed with the police.

Four southern districts brought under ARP

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 3: Four southern districts have been brought under Agricultural Rehabilitation Programme (ARP). These four districts are: Barisal, Bhola, Pirojpur and Faridpur.

According to Agriculture Extension Department 650 acres of land will be primarily brought under this programme with an estimated cost of Taka 8 lakh 6 thousand.

Bridge across river Padma demanded

MEHERPUR, Sept 3: Local leaders, professionals and cross section of people held a meeting here on Friday demanding a bridge across the river Padma to connect the country's southwestern districts with the capital, reports UNB.

Prof Abdul Mannan MP, Abdul Ghani MP, Faridpur Pura Chairman Fazul Kabir Chand, Jhenidah Pura Chairman S M Anisur Rahman Khoka, Sk Abbasuddin Harun, panel chairman Jessore Pourashava and other local leaders addressed the meeting at Meherpur Pourashava auditorium.

Speakers at the meeting reiterated the demand for construction of a bridge over the Padma to link south and south-western districts with the capital as well as rest of the country.

Tale of two fishermen

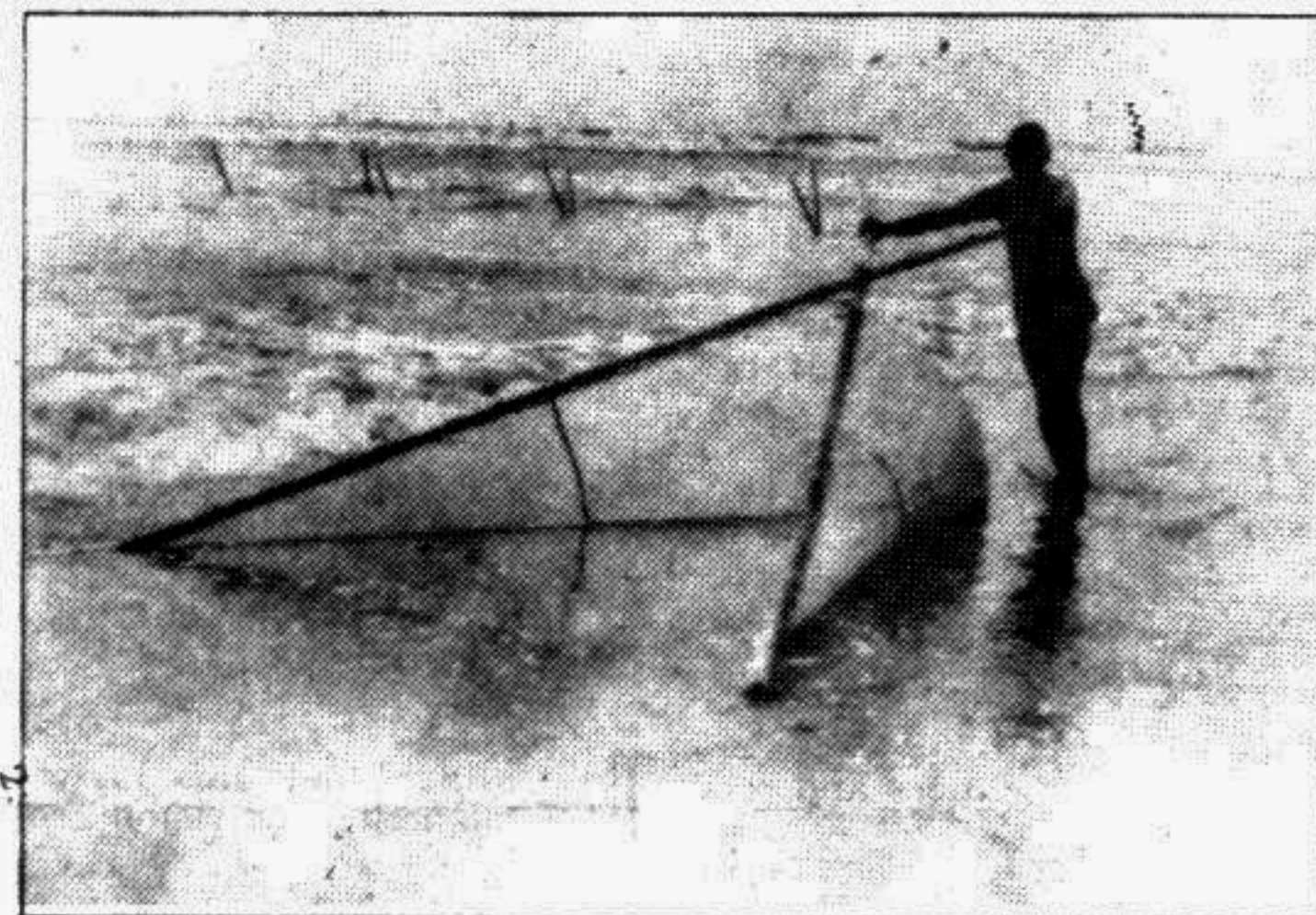
By Naimul Haq back from Cox's Bazar

The roaring of the sea waves frightens you as they pound the beach menacingly. But they never succeed in frightening Abul Hossain, 50, a born fisherman from Barisal.

Hossain, father of four daughters and two sons, has been fishing in the Bay for the last two and a half years. "I was forced to come to Cox's Bazar when I lost everything in river erosion. One of my relatives suggested that I could start a new life catching fish in Cox's Bazar. This is it. Back home, I had a house, a boat, a cow, a small piece of land and hosts of friends but here all I have is my family.

Mohammad Nizam, in his late forties, also has a similar story to tell. He catches fry using khura as the tool. This is more daring. He walks deeper into the sea to find strong foundation for two pieces of bamboo locally known as khura. A net is then placed in between the bamboo. The fry are trapped in the pocket of the net as non-stop waves run through the net.

This method, though a risky one, earns Nizam more money. On an average he catches 900 to 1000 fry a day. "Separating the fry is the toughest part," says Nizam. "You must have a professional eye to distinguish



Abul Hossain with his fishing net.

Hossain lives with his family in a slum only 350 meters away from the shore. He catches shrimp fry twice a day, with a triangle of a net having bamboo frames. He braves 12 to 18 metres deep into the wild sea. "I agree it's risky to go in there but it's the only option I have," says Hossain describing the method he uses to catch fry. "I run my net along the length of the beach for about two hours to let as many fry into the net as possible. It's no easy job; you could lose your net in those mighty waves. The catch is sometimes good but at times you end up in disappointment. On an average I collect 400 to 500 fry which can fetch up to Tk 100 a day. We sell the fry at the rate of Tk 21 for every 100. During the off-season the traders offer Tk 12 to 18 for a 100.

Hossain says, "I stay away from the sea for two months when it becomes too rough. Then I work as a day labourer,

between a single fry and weed." Most of the time they appear identical. The weeds give trouble in separating the fry. "At times you could lose your precious catch as you drain the water out."

Nizam's family is made up of four sons, a daughter and his wife, Maina Begum. He is a man of ambition. He says, "I was twice in danger in the sea. The first time it happened when I lost control and was almost pulled in by the strong waves. I luckily got hold of another khura about 20 feet away. The second one happened when a crab caught my left leg. I was in terrible pain. A fellow fisherman rescued me when he heard me crying for help."

Nizam, from Barguna district, also lives with his family in a nearby slum. He came to Cox's Bazar nine years ago to work in a saw mill. He was refused employment as he could not show that he had any previous experience.

Even though the people of Bangladesh are all very familiar with soyabean oil, they are not yet aware of the food value contents of the soyabean seeds. Soyabean is not a new crop in Bangladesh. Presumably, due to lack of knowledge of its intake value, its uses and want of required culinary skills, the soyabean has remained under-cultivated, mostly under-used and its possible benefits unknown. No doubt that in certain parts of Bangladesh, soyabean is a new crop.

It is an inescapable fact that it is difficult to introduce any new food into the existing food-habits of the people. However, the existing agricultural system in the country is suitable for cultivation of soyabean. The growers need to be made aware of the benefits they may derive from sowing it.

Satana Uttarpara is a village under Belgachia union in Kurigram Thana under Kurigram district in the northern Bangladesh. The impoverishment of the local people is significantly visible. They prominently depend on agriculture or offer labour.

The women folk increasingly feel that they need to supplement their husband's income and gradually become self-reliant. In the wake of this enlightenment, they have started to explore the possible ways and means to enhance the income of their families. They have the will and potentialities. They further realise

The Satana Uttarpara Mahila Dal is one such group. They grow varieties of vegetables to make up for the need of their families. One of their basic problems is food deficiency. They were striving hard to overcome the same but to little significance. Last year, the group members were informed by the organiser that soyabean is rich in

22 kg tumour removed

PATUAKHALI, Sept 3: A tumour, weighing 22 kg was removed from the stomach of a woman at the Sadar Hospital here last week, reports UNB.

The patient, Saleha Begum, 35, wife of Md Abul Hossain of village Taktabunia in Antall thana was having the huge lump for the last six years.

She was admitted to the hospital under Dr Habibur Rahman, Junior Consultant of Surgery, and later operated upon in the Himi Poly Clinic in the town.

The operation was successful and the patient's condition is steady, clinic sources said.

Meanwhile, people are rushing in to see the huge tumour.

Medium wave radio station will be set up in Barisal

BARISAL, Sept 3: A medium wave radio station will be established at Rupatali, about four kilometres from here beside Barisal-Jhalakati highways at an expenditure of Tk. 18.65 crore including a foreign exchange component of Tk. 6.50 crore during the current fiscal, reports BSS.

According to an official source, government sanctioned Tk two crore for purchasing land and earth-work for this project.

Meanwhile, Land Ministry issued an order to acquire 18.77 acres of land immediately for the implementation of the project.

12 die of snake bite

SATKHIRA, Sept 3: Twelve people in different parts of the district died of snake bites in the last one month, local people said, reports UNB.

Some 400 people of the district were also bitten by snakes during the period, they said.

The incidents of death have been reported from Matikamra, Pub Naitha, Ziar Khai, Bejeratias and Karpur villages.

A large number of snakes came out in the locality as saline water poured into snake holes due to massive shrimp cultivation in the district.

We need to explore unknown benefits of soyabean seeds as food

By Jerome Sarkar

that without proving their worth as potential partners in bread-winning of the family, it will not be possible to establish their status as equal to men.

The RDRS, a leading NGO in Kurigram district has taken up programmes to help them become self-reliant.

Bharati Rani, a social worker, was assigned to organise the poor women into small groups with 15 to 20 members each. After a few weeks of persuasion, she was able to form desired groups of women.

The use of soyabean and benefits obtained from consuming soyabean have been explained. More people were interested in the programme. Bharati Rani, the organiser, said that the villagers had not been acquainted with the words "protein or calorie". But, they had known about the benefits of taking "vitamins". So, the easiest way to make them understand is by explaining that soyabean is rich in vitamins and contains the food value of fish and meat. Since fish or meat is hardly within their reach, they can easily get the same food value by consuming soyabean.

protein and calorie. This information spurred interest in Nuran Nahar Begum, a member of the group to grow soyabean. She bought seeds from the organiser and sowed half a kilogram seed in five decimal of land. The harvest was 15 kgs. Another woman from the same union on hearing the news also cultivated and succeeded in producing 20 kg by sowing one kg of seed in seven decimal of land. Both of the women cultivated soyabean in the last week of January and

harvested in May this year.

Nasrin Akhter is a Thana Manager of RDRS, Kurigram. She is very active and resourceful. She started her career as an organiser. She is a very familiar face to the local poor women folk. Her motivational capacity seemed to be impeccable. Besides, she is a good trainer. A woman with such promising abilities is not

common find in the rural areas. Her spirit, dedication and selflessness is commendable. She uses a motorcycle to attend office as well as to visit the field. She took the initiative to arrange the necessary cooking demonstrations for the women groups under her thana to familiarise the use of soyabean.

After obtaining training, the organisers, in turn, conduct cooking demonstrations for their group members. Bharati has so far conducted two such



A F M Kamal, Chairman Sylhet Pourashava, speaking (L) at an orientation course, for Imams, on Mother and Child Health Fortnight recently. Barisal Division Health Department (R) brought out a colourful procession with banners and festoons marking the Mother and Child Health Fortnight '94 recently.

— Star photos

Mother, Child Health Fortnight in dists

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 3: The first mother and child health fortnight '94' began here with a

promise to save some eight lakh children and 28 thousand mothers from early death.

In a press conference held at the Barisal Circuit House conference room recently, Dr Anisur Rahman, Deputy Director (Health), Barisal Division discussed the programmes taken up in observance this fortnight in Barisal Division.

The press conference was also addressed by M A Rashid, Divisional Commissioner, Barisal, Abdur Rahman, Divisional Director, Family Planning, Fazul Haq, Deputy Director, UNICEF, Barisal and Khulna Divisions, Dr Sheikh Haider Ali, Civil Surgeon, Barisal, conducted the press conference.

Speakers here said that EPI programme was successfully implemented with 60 per cent of target achieved in Barisal division.

Speakers also said, some eight lakh children under one year of age would be immunised with measles vaccines while 51 lakh would be given vitamin 'A' capsules. They admitted that the mortality rate of mothers and child is still higher in the country. Maternal mortality in Bangladesh is 150 times more

than other developed countries, they said.

Besides, during this fortnight pregnant mothers will be immunised and school-going children will be given tablets for eradication of intestinal worms.

Speakers also stressed on the awareness and necessity of breastfeeding, family planning and the use of iodised salt and oral dehydration saline (ORS).

Eleven programmes including sanitation and diarrhoea control, ORS distribution, anti helminth drive, control of iodine deficiency, TT campaign, distribution of vitamin 'A' capsules have been taken up in observance of the fortnight.

Mother, Child Health Fortnight in Faridpur, Jamalpur

Mother and Child Health Fortnight, a part of the countrywide programme began here recently through a colourful rally at the premises of Dr Zahed Memorial Shishu Hospital, reports BSS.

The programme of the fortnight organised by local health and family planning depart-

ment includes discussion meetings, exhibition on mother and child health, scientific seminars for the doctors, football competition, essay competition, handball competition, baby show and painting competition.

Briefing local newsman civil surgeon of Faridpur Dr Kazi Syed Ahmed said that the aim of the fortnight was to create social awareness about mother and child health care. The civil surgeon said that some measures have been taken in this district to reduce mother and child mortality rates.

According to the civil surgeon, 64 thousand oral rehydration saline bags (ORS) will be distributed among 732 primary schools of the district to popularise oral rehydration therapy. Three lakh 42 thousand vit-A capsules will also be distributed in the district during next three months, he said. Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) which already has achieved about eighty per cent success in the district would further be geared up to attain ninety per cent by 1995, he added.

UNB adds: Mother and Child Health Fortnight '94 has begun in the Jamalpur district recently with much enthusiasm as elsewhere in the country.

The day began with a colourful rally which paraded different roads of the town starting from the local stadium and terminated at Ladies Club. People from all walks of life including representatives from NGOs, health department, family planning department and students from different educational institutions took part in the rally.

A discussion meeting was also held at the Ladies Club hall. Presided over by civil surgeon Dr Askar Ali, it was attended by deputy commissioner Jalal Ahmed as chief guest.

The speakers called upon the educated section of the society to create awareness among the mothers about family planning, use of iodised salt and breastfeeding which will bring down death rate of mothers and children.

The other programmes of the fortnight are — seminar, discussion meeting, photo and video exhibition, jari song, football competition and home visit to tell the people about the utility of the iodised salt.

For the successful implementation of the 15-day programme, a committee of 15 members has been formed with deputy civil surgeon Dr Mohammad Shahidullah as co-ordinator.

Proper system of election should be formulated: Rouf

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 3: Chief Election Commissioner Justice Abdur Rouf has said, democracy can not be given a proper shape unless a proper system of election is formulated. He also called upon all to come forward with constructive ideas with a view to making the election procedure acceptable to all.

Justice Rouf was addressing a gathering of the leaders of different political parties, lawyers, journalists and others at he conference room of the Deputy Commissioner here recently.

He said, the system of election should be made more dynamic and for this, the existing laws should be changed, if needed.

Justice Rouf said, the country experienced a total of 27

elections during the past 23 years. It includes, 12 national and 12 of local bodies. The current election laws could not be developed due to frequent holding of elections, he added. "It also stood on the way of developing a proper system of election."

He said the political parties should develop a better understanding between themselves to achieve the goal.

The Election Commission was considering the introduction of 'voters registration' in place of the existing system of voters list, justice added.

He informed that the number of voters would stand at six crore in the next election.

Our Correspondent adds: Deputy Leader of the House Professor A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury said, awareness of

common people should be ensured to save them from the killer disease (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) AIDS. The conscious section of the society should come forward to take up the responsibility.

Professor Chowdhury was addressing a seminar on AIDS at the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College as chief guest recently. The function was also addressed by Professor Abdur Ahad Chowdhury while Professor Golan Kibria, Principal of the college, presided.

B Chowdhury also attended the installation ceremony of the medicine club of the college. Khondaker Abdul Malik MP, and Begum Fatema Chowdhury MP also attended as special guests.

growing soyabean. However when the seeds sprout, the chickens often pose a threat because they eat up or destroy them.

The growers have already expressed their enthusiasm for cultivating soyabean. To materialise this, they demanded need for greater cooperation from the established organisations. They have already requested their apa (the organiser) to make arrangement with the authority concerned for supply of seeds.

The concerned authorities, including agriculture department, may take measures to popularise soyabean as food item among the poor people through motivational campaigns and demonstrations.

The availability of seeds to the farmers will ensure more production. Once the people are convinced of the benefits of soyabean, they would perhaps include this food to their traditional dishes. That in turn will expand the market for soyabean which in turn will raise cultivation of soyabean.

Hopefully, soyabean will fulfill the need of protein and calorie of the poor on one hand ensuring better health and will bring in positive results in the form of income generation confirming better economic condition.

(The writer has recently visited some rural areas of greater Rangpur district.)

Coastal areas of Patuakhali, Barguna have potentials to produce gol pata

PATUAKHALI, Sept 3: Coastal areas of Barguna and greater Patuakhali districts have potential lands to produce 'Gol-Pata', a tropical plant used for making huts in the rural areas, reports UNB.

Local people said both the water and soil in Patherghata, Amtali, Banna, Betagi, Barguna Sadar, Patuakhali Sadar, Bauphal, Dasmina, Kalapara, Mirzagonj and Galachipa thanas in the districts are very favourable for 'Gol Pata' cultivation.

Salinity of water in the region is potential ingredients for large scale production of 'Gol-Pata' and making it a commercially viable project, experts said.

Hundreds of acres of charland and lowlying areas in the district left unutilised and unfit for paddy and other crop production, is suitable for growing the plant, it is learnt.

The plant, used for roofs in rural houses, mainly grow in and around the Sunderban regions of Khulna, Bagerhat, Pirojpur and Satkhira districts.

The local people urged the authorities concerned to take initiative for cultivation of 'Gol-Pata' in the areas to increase the economic standard of the rural poor.

Continuous drought, aman output may decline

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Sept 3: Continuous drought for the last two months severely affected the cultivation of aman crop in the district. As a result, farmers could not transplant aman seedlings on huge areas. About 60 per cent of the land is still lying fallow for want of adequate water.

At the same time, jute cultivators could not process jute plants due to storages of water. Most of the water bodies went nearly dry for want of adequate rainfall. Many of the aman cultivators meanwhile, have started planting aman seedlings using water from pumps. Inadequate rainfall will severely hamper aman production from the district.