

## Two get 7-year RI for snatching in Pirojpur

PIROJPUR, Oct 5: Two people were awarded seven years rigorous imprisonment with a fine of Tk 10,000 each, in default, to suffer six months more, for snatching away money from a man, reports UNB.

According to prosecution story, Hemayet and Sarwar of Kadomtala village in sadar thana of the district snatched away cash from the possession of Komol Krishna of local Grameen Bank. While fleeing with the money by exploding bombs the snatchers were caught red handed by the villagers on July 21, 1993.

A case was started and police after investigation submitted charge-sheet against them.

Special Tribunal Judge Mujibur Rahman after examining the witnesses and records found Hemayet and Sarwar guilty and awarded the punishment last week.

## Faridpur Lions Club's 19th installation ceremony held

FARIDPUR, Oct 5: Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf said here that the present government is ready to extend all cooperation and support to private medicare entrepreneurs to ensure better health services in the country, reports BSS.

The minister was speaking on Friday at the 19th installation ceremony of the Faridpur Lions Club at Kabi Jasimuddin Hall here.

The minister in his speech invited the private entrepreneurs to come forward and set up health care establishments because the existing facilities provided by the government are not adequate to meet the needs of teeming millions.

To a proposal placed by a lions office-bearer of Dhaka for setting up a kidney research institute in the country the minister assured all possible help and cooperation for the project.

The function was also addressed by State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum. Among others, deputy commissioner of Faridpur spoke in the function.

President Shahjada Mia, secretary Yunus Mia along with other office-bearers of Faridpur Lions Club were administered oath for the year 1994-95.

The function was presided by out-going president Shahjahan Molla in the first session while the second session was presided by newly-elected president.

## Pedestrian crushed under wheels

NARAYANGANJ, Oct 5: A pedestrian was killed in a bus accident on Sunday morning when a Narayanganj bound bus ran over him near number two Dhakeswari bus stand in Sridhara thana, reports UNB.

Police said, Firoj Miah, a clerk of Port Education office was standing beside the road when he met the accident. The driver, after the incident, managed to leave the spot with the bus.

After the news of Firoj Miah's death spread, students have started ransacking some buses and pelting stones to police.

Police also threw tear gas to the angry students to control the situation. As a result, 12 people were injured.

During the clash, the road communication between Narayanganj and Adamjee was brought to a halt for two hours from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.

A case has been registered with the police.

## Resolutions adopted to face drought in Gaibandha

GAIBANDHA, Oct 5: District Coordination Committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner has adopted a number of resolutions at a meeting on Thursday to face the prevailing drought situation in the district, reports UNB.

Official sources said the committee initiated various schemes to provide jobs for landless workers and hoped to bring the situation under control.

Meanwhile, fertilizer crisis has turned acute in the district. The farmers alleged that a section of dishonest traders have enhanced the prices of fertilizers taking advantage of irregular supplies.

They urged the government to ensure fair supply of fertilizer and take steps to check the price hike.



NOAKHALI: The International Elderly Day '94 was observed in Noakhali as elsewhere in the country. A colourful rally, led by the Deputy Commissioner Noakhali Md Mohsin Rahaman, was brought out in the town recently marking the day.

—Star photo

## Crippling economy in Jamalpur Miseries of farmers, fishermen continue to increase

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Oct 5: The economy of Jamalpur district is being crippled due to poor production of crops for the last few consecutive years as well as lack of industrialisation and poor employment opportunities.

The paucity of seeds, fertilizer, irrigation facilities, and persistent drought contributed to the fall of production. The marginal farmers, who constitute about 85 per cent of population here could not cultivate their land properly for want of agri inputs including bank loan.

The total population of the district is about 1.8 lakh. Only five per cent are engaged in business and services while 85 per cent dependent on agriculture.

A recent survey reveals that over 65 per cent of village people live below the poverty line and are compelled to sell out their produce in advance to the local money lenders just to maintain their livelihood for a price much below the market rate, usually Tk 80 to 100 per maund.

Taking advantage of the situation, the local money lenders are doing a brisk business by giving loans on high rate of interest.

The source said a large number of landless people who lost their work as agricultural labourers are passing days half-fed or sometimes unfed.

They are forced to sell their animals and utensils for mere survival. It is learnt that the price of bullocks has drastically fallen and about 50 per cent of the poor farmers have already sold their animals.

The condition of the sugarcane growers is even worse as they have incurred heavy losses this year due to lack of marketing facilities. About 50 per cent of sugarcane produced in the district were wasted.

People in different char areas of Jamalpur district earn their livelihood by selling sweet potato but the farmers are facing problems due to poor production at lower

price. Sweet potato is sold between Tk 70 and 100 per maund.

A large number of fishermen were left unemployed following sharp decline in fish production.

Most of the beets and rivers have silted up causing havoc to pisciculture.

To help solve the unemployment problems a huge quantity of rice and wheat has been sanctioned against uplift project under the Food for Work Programme.

But gross irregularities and misappropriation are alleged.

The villagers are selling their poultry birds and other properties to meet their daily necessities. The price of land has fallen for want of buyers.

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation earlier was the sole distributor of irrigation equipment.

At present, there is no control over the quality of the equipment for which low quality equipment have flooded the markets.

## Confe of SCEMR,B in Faridpur

## Call for providing education facilities to mentally retarded

FARIDPUR, Oct 5: The first regional conference of the Society for the Care and Education of Mentally Retarded, Bangladesh (SCEMR.B) held here on Friday called for providing education facilities to the mentally retarded as part of government strategy to achieve universal education for all citizens by the year 2000.

Ahmed Jamal, joint secretary of SCEMR.B, Faridpur branch presented the key-note paper on the problems in this field and suggestions for their education and training.

Speakers called for adequate support from the government for incorporating the rights of the mentally retarded in the programme for universal education for all, legislation in the Jatiya Sangsad to protect and promote the rights of the disabled including the mentally retarded, survey for identification of these disadvantaged group throughout the country, formulation of a special curriculum based on the mental retardation of each individual and creation of mass awareness.

In his presidential speech DP Barua said that the rights of mentally retarded in the families and the society in all fields were being highlighted in the context of UN-Sponsored International Year of the Family, 1994. He said, a national policy for the disabled including the mentally retarded is being formulated by the Social Welfare Ministry of the government with the participation of NGOs working in this field to ensure their rights in vari-

ous fields.

Barua said, the government strategy of education for all, has in principle, accepted the rights of the large number of disabled including the mentally retarded in the plan for universal education. He said the SCEMR.B as the national interest organisation shall have to take responsibilities to work as a pressure group for realising the rights of the mentally retarded.

Discussions in the workshop included Mosharraf Hussain, MP, Mansurul Alam, secretary, Barisal branch, Dr Abdul Mannan, secretary, Bhola branch, Meen Shawkat Ali, secretary, Bagerhat branch, Masuda Begum, principal of Asha School of Faridpur, Prof Nargis Begum, secretary of Jessor branch, Mohammad Shahjahan, treasurer, Faridpur branch, Tawhidur Rahman, Treasurer of Jessor branch, Asma Akhtar Banu, teacher from Kushtia, Professor Nurul Islam, treasurer of Khulna branch, secretary general Dr Giasuddin Molla, first joint secretary general, CDR (Rtd) A J M Hamed Hossain, organising secretary Sajida Kabir, NEC members, M A Shafi Majumdar, Shahara Banu Salam, M Faizullah and Mazharul Karim.

The conference presided over by Alhaj Firozur Rahman, president of Faridpur SCEMR.B was attended by 21 representatives from SCEMR.B branches in Khulna, Bagerhat, Kushtia, Bhola, Barisal, Jessor and Faridpur.

The conference was inaugurated at the local "Asha School Bhaban" here by the Deputy Commissioner K M Nurul Huda as chief guest who in his speech hoped that the conference would help in creating mass awareness among the people and contribute to the welfare of the mentally retarded. Among others, the inaugural session was also addressed as special guests by DP Barua, president of SCEMR.B Dr Giasuddin Molla, secretary general, SCEMR.B and Mosharraf Hussain, member of parliament.

Eighteen participants in the main working session lasting for nearly three hours under-



SYLHET: A 13-member plastic surgery team from UK is now on a 12-day visit in Sylhet. The surgeons of the team are seen with some of the patients at Nurjan Poly Clinic recently.

—Star photo

## National

# They deserve the challenges

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Oct 5: A tale of numerous distressed women, who changed their lot from the abyss of poverty and frustration.

Amina, Shabana Khatun, Gita Rani, Puspa Rani, Chapala Rani and few others look for a better life.

Amina Khatun, 39, a widow of village Kusobaria in Sylhet thana of the district was passing days in extreme hardship. Finding no other alternative, she took loan from the Grameen Samaj Kendra. Now she is the second earning member of the family and can help her family with contribution of about Taka 30 to 35 a day.

Puspa Rani Das, 40, of Sylhet leads a happy life with her husband Narayan Das and four children. One of her sons passed this year's SSC examinations.

Puspa said, "there was no peace in the family. They had to starve at times."

Shabana Khatun, 33, another poor fellow of Amina of village Nagirhat in Sylhet thana. She is mother of a son and a daughter. She also took loan of Taka one thousand from the same organisation. She earns between Taka 30 and 35 everyday husking paddy.

Shabana said, she suffered a lot as her husband deserted

her. However, she did not give up. She is now self-reliant.

Gita Rani Misty, 31, a housewife changed her fate by making chira and muri. She had taken loan from the Grameen Samaj Kendra. Now she is the second earning member of the family and can help her family with contribution of about Taka 30 to 35 a day.

Chapala Rani Das, 35, also leads a happy life with her husband Narayan Das and four children. One of her sons passed this year's SSC examinations.

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## Road mishap claims two in Savar

SARV, Oct 5: Two people were killed and 15 persons injured when two trucks collided head-on on the Dhaka-Aricha highway near Jahangirnagar University early on Monday, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Makrum, 60, businessman of Hargar village in Saturia thana of Manikganj district, and a truck helper.

Eight of the injured were admitted to Savar Health Complex and seven others of Ganoshasthya Kendra.

Police said an Archa-bound truck from Dhaka collided with another loaded truck at 4 am.

Bodies were sent to the Dhaka medical College Hospital for autopsy. A case was filed with Savar thana.

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