

**Four awarded life-term for murder**

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 26 : Four people were sentenced to life term and 14 others to two years imprisonment on Monday for killing a man, court sources here said, reports UNB.

The court awarded life term imprisonment to Hasen Ali, Abu Sayed, Alam and Razaque.

According to the prosecution, Shahadat Hossain, 42 of Soratoli village in Shajadpur thana was attacked and killed by some miscreants over a previous enmity at Kashinathpur Mela on April 10, 1992.

A case was filed and police after investigation submitted charge-sheet against 18 people.

After examining the witnesses and records the District and Sessions Judge ATM Fazley Kabir awarded the punishment aimed the crowded court.



SYLHET: Director General of the British-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and a member of the British trade delegation, Dr Kabir Hossain Chowdhury speaking at a reception arranged in his honour in Sylhet town recently. — Star photo

**University college teachers assoc confce held at BAU**

MYMENSINGH, Nov 26 : The biennial conference of Bangladesh College-University Teachers Association Agriculture University branch was held at the BAU premises recently, says BSS.

Professor Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University was present as chief guest. Professor Shah Muhammad Faruk, Vice-Chancellor of Agriculture University and Professor Dr Akhtaruzzaman, President, Bangladesh College-University Teachers Association Attended the conference as special guests.

Presided over by Professor A M Muazzam Hussain, the conference was addressed among others by professor Mansurul Amin, Professor Syed Shakhwat Hussain, Dr Nur Muhammad Talukder and Ashrafuzzaman Selim.

Zillur Rahman Siddiqui said, the system that creates discrimination in the facilities of education for students coming from various sections must be brought to an end.

**Huge areas under rabi crop cultivation scheme**

BARISAL, Nov 26 : A total of 3,17, 757 hectares of land will be brought under different rabi crops cultivation in the Barisal region of Bangladesh Agriculture Extension Department during the current winter season, reports BSS.

The region comprises the districts of Barisal, Jhalakati, Bhola, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Faridpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Rajbari and Shariatpur.

According to an official source, boro, wheat, potato, maize and mustard, will be brought under cultivation.

Of the total, 1,94,827 hectares will be brought under boro cultivation, 53,180 hectares under wheat cultivation, 4,600 hectares under potato cultivation, 365 hectares under maize cultivation and 64,785 hectares under mustard cultivation. 8,49,591 metric tons of boro paddy, 1,06,360 metric tons of wheat, 50,600 metric tons of potato, 1,095 metric tons of maize and 43,219 metric tons of mustard may be produced in these districts, the source added.

Over 400 demonstration plots will be set up to educate people about the modern method of cultivation.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) will supply seeds, fertilizers, insecticides and other necessary inputs to the farmers to make the programme a success.

**ODA, WB team visits agri projects in Kurigram**

From Our Correspondent KURIGRAM, Nov 26: Foreign delegates headed by Porter of Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of Britain recently visited Kurigram to see the progress of various agricultural projects taken in Kurigram. The delegates included the World Bank members Young Choi and Dr Ghani.

They were accompanied by Ahsan Ali Sarker, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, MA Rouf, Director, DAE, Dhaka, Zahurul Haque, Additional Director, DAE, Rangpur zone.

The team members visited the demonstration plots of various farmers and expressed their satisfaction over the activities there.

**BASIC in Moulvibazar, Hobiganj Authorities get little response**

From Our Correspondent MOULVIBAZAR, Nov 26: The proposed two industrial estates of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BASIC) in Moulvibazar and Hobiganj districts are yet to be started even after spending crores of taka.

Problems, which these estates face are quite different in nature. Moulvibazar BASIC industrial estate is ready to start its operation; but the establishment works of the Hobiganj BASIC industrial estates is yet to be completed.

A source of the Moulvibazar BASIC industrial estate said they have completed all the necessary works of the estate. Connection of electricity, gas and water to all the plots have already been installed. The plots are now ready for operation.

In 1987, 14.59 acres of land was acquired at Gumrah, three kilometres from Moulvibazar district town to construct BASIC estate. In 1993, all of the establishment work was completed for 95 plots including 41-A type plots each having 4500 square-feet of space, 40-B type plots each having 3000 square-feet and rest 14 plots of special type different in sizes. Allotment rate of all the plots are fixed at Taka seven thousand per decimal of land.

According to applications invited by the local BASIC authority, only ten applications have been received so far and plots were already allotted to them.

The Promotion Officer of Moulvibazar BASIC office told The Daily Star that the BASIC authority has provided a 'prescription' to the interested entrepreneurs producing 55 items in 10 categories at Moulvibazar BASIC industrial estate as raw-materials and marketing facilities of these 'prescribed' items will be easily available in this region. The categories of items which were 'prescribed' for the entrepreneurs of Moulvibazar are — food products, garments, jute based handicrafts, timber products, printing and packing items, leather products, rubber products, glass and ceramic products, engineering, mechanical items, electrical goods and processed fruit.

The Promotion Officer added that, as the estate was located in rural area, interested entrepreneurs have shown little interest fearing risk of such promotional activities. So, at the initial stage response at Moulvibazar BASIC from the entrepreneurs to establish small and cottage industry based firms is very poor. But this situation will be over soon, he hoped. He also added that, people of all sectors in Moulvibazar region have been always influenced by the effect of demonstrations. After seeing initiative of interested investors, others will come forward, it is the common nature of the people of this rich area, the officer explained. Citing example, he pointed out that the BASIC authority has contacted the Mukta Soap Factory, a local popular firm to set up their factory at Moulvibazar BASIC industrial estate. If the Mukta Soap authorities do so, other investors may come forward to establish factories here too.

Situation of the BASIC industrial estate at Hobiganj district has been facing problems of establishment. After spending crores of Taka the estate still remains incomplete.

It is gathered that the government had taken up a scheme in 1987 to establish a BASIC industrial estate. Accordingly 15 acres of land was acquired at Dhulaikhal area, six kilometre from Hobiganj district town at a cost of Taka 22 lakh for the purpose. After that, earth filling work of three-fourth area of the total land was completed with an expenditure of Taka 40 lakh. Besides this, an administrative building was also constructed at a cost of Taka 11.32 lakh and an overhead water tank was constructed. A deep tube-well was also sunk at a cost of Taka 16 lakh. The Rural Electrification Board (REB), also constructed power distribution lines for the estate with an expenditure of Taka 5.44 lakh. At last, internal link roads has been constructed with an expenditure of Taka 1.17 lakh. But other works at the Hobiganj BASIC estate remain incomplete.

It is learnt from the BASIC source in Hobiganj, there are 66 proposed industrial units in four categories. Of them, 18 units with 900 square-feet each is A category, 16 units each having 6000 square-feet of space is B category, 10 units each having 4500 square-feet of space is C category and 22 units with different sizes is special category. The BASIC authority has fixed Taka 20.08 for each square-foot to lease out the industrial units to the interested entrepreneurs. A total of 18 entrepreneurs have applied for the allotment of different units in July this year but allotment has not yet been made.

The sources also told The Daily Star that, at least 12 thousand people would be provided jobs directly in Moulvibazar and Hobiganj BASIC industrial estate, while another 25 thousand people would be benefited from both the BASIC estates indirectly.

**Massive siltation in rivers, navigation, irrigation seriously affected**

From Our Correspondent CHANDPUR, Nov 26: The rivers Meghna, Dakatia and Dhanagoda flowing through Chandpur district have alarmingly silted up posing threat to navigational routes.

With the advent of the dry season the water level of these rivers has fallen to a great extent bringing a standstill to the movement of country boats, steamers and launches. The tributary of the Meghna is drying up fast. Huge charland have emerged at different points of the river, hindering the natural flow of water.

Steamers, launches cannot ply easily. Sometimes steamers and launches are caught by unseen charlands in the middle of river.

Passengers travelling between Chandpur and Dhaka and Chandpur and Barisal and Faridpur cannot reach their destination on time sometimes due delays.

The riverbeds of Dakatia and Dhanagoda are also drying up rapidly causing dislocation of navigation. A large area of Dakatia river dried up where farmers are cultivating various crops. Due to siltation in the river Dakatia business in Chandpur Pura is hampered, an important commercial centre, is seriously hampered. Goods in the market cannot be unloaded due to emergence of charland in the river. So, goods from the launches and steamers are carried by coolies from a distant area in the river. Cargo ships and country boats cannot reach the bank of the river as most area of the bank have dried up.

It may be mentioned that there are two big irrigation projects of Water Development Board in Chandpur. The projects are Chandpur Irrigation Project and Matlab Meghna-Dhanagoda Irrigation Project.

Irrigation in these two projects are also hampered as most part of the river Dakatia and Dhanagoda have dried up.

People urged the authority to take a comprehensive plan for dredging the river Meghna, Dakatia and Dhanagoda as early as possible for smooth navigation and business transaction.

**Meeting discusses working procedure of Open University**

BARISAL, Nov 26: A general meeting on the awareness of the working procedure of the Open University of Bangladesh for the division, district and thana level officers of Barisal Division was held recently with divisional commissioner M A Rashid in the chair, reports BSS.

Prof M Shamsheer Ali, Vice Chancellor of the Open University, attended the meeting as chief guest here.

Besides, K M Shahabuddin, Additional Divisional Commissioner (General), Yakub Ali, Additional Divisional Commissioner (Revenue) and Mizanur Rahman, DDLG, along with six deputy commissioners and 38 TNOs of six southern districts of Barisal division participated in the meeting, the first of its kind here.

Explaining the different activities of the Open University, the Vice Chancellor Prof M Shamsheer Ali said, the students can learn their lessons here according to the will of the students concerned avoiding session jam and turning themselves into any education campus.

He said, an experienced teacher can teach the whole volume of the students at a time by a single lecture through audio and video systems avoiding traditional education systems. He sought whole-hearted cooperation from all the officials of this division for implementing the system here.

Divisional Commissioner M A Rashid said, the Open University has been created as a result of the evolution in the educational sphere of the country. He committed the whole-hearted co-operation with the vice chancellor of the university for implementing the new education processes in the rural areas of the country.

Later, the Vice Chancellor along with Barisal Divisional Commissioner visited the site for the construction of a regional centre under the Open University here at Madhabpasha, about seven kilometres from the town.

**VC of Khulna university shocked at the demise of Principal Khan**

The Vice-Chancellor of Khulna University expressed his deep shock at the sudden death of Principal Yunus Khan, the state minister, Ministry of Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

In a condolence message the Vice-Chancellor said, that at his sad demise, the country had lost a great educationist and an ardent social worker. Besides, he also mentioned that an irreparable loss was made by the sorrowful death of Principal Khan, especially in the field of education.

Remembering some of the important services of the leader, the Vice-Chancellor said Khan carried out his responsibilities with sincerity and utmost devotion.

The Vice-Chancellor prayed to Allah for the salvation of the departed soul and expressed his profound sympathy for the bereaved members of his family.

**Tk 4.75 lakh robbed from bus passengers**

BRAHMANBARIA, Nov 26 : Several passengers were wounded and valuables worth Taka 4.75 lakh were robbed on Brahmanbaria-Sylhet Highway on Saturday, reports UNB.

According to police, a gang of robbers numbering 8 to 10 suddenly attacked a coaster when it reached at Kamalpur bridge under sadar thana. They beat the passengers indiscriminately and decamped with the booty.

The two helpers of the bus also fled away along with the dacoits. The driver of the bus was also handed over to the police.

In another incident, armed dacoits numbering 6 to 7, swooped on a Dhaka bound rafter near the same bridge and wounded some of the passengers, including the driver on the following day.

Later, in the face of strong resistance by the passengers the dacoits fled the scene without committing the dacoity.



BARISAL: Subrata Biswas, a young magician of Barisal has been selected as the 'best magician' for his outstanding performances in Bangladesh and abroad. Subrata Biswas was selected 'best magician' by the Bangladesh Magic Academy for the year 1994. This decision was taken by the 'Bangladesh Magic Academy' in a meeting held at New York recently. — Star photo

**Five projects costing Tk 1cr to be implemented in Rajbari**

RAJBARI, Nov 26: Local Government Engineering Department has taken up five construction projects in three thanas of the district in the current fiscal, reports UNB.

The projects will be implemented at a cost of over Tk 1.01 crore. Works of the projects are expected to begin soon.

The projects include construction of water supply infrastructure at Joshai union of Pangsha thana, bricklaying on a 4-kilometre feeder road linking Balliakandi and Narua and concrete work of the Rajbari-Pangsha road.

**Two killed in separate incidents**

BOGRA, Nov 26: Two people, including a student, were killed in separate incidents, police said here, reports UNB.

Abul Kashem, 35, a village watchman was beaten to death by some neighbours at Jaleswaritala of the town on Monday night as he allegedly failed to catch a thief while stealing betelnuts. He succumbed to his injuries at a local clinic.

In another incident, Abdur Rahman Rashed, 15, a school student, was stabbed by a gang of youths inside a room of the old building of Government Azizul Haque College at about 11-30 pm on Tuesday.

**'It's amazing to see how much people can do with so little'**

MYMENSINGH, Nov 26 : Education Minister of Lesotho Prof Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, now on a visit to Bangladesh to see the education system in the current fiscal, reports UNB.

The projects will be implemented at a cost of over Tk 1.01 crore. Works of the projects are expected to begin soon.

The projects include construction of water supply infrastructure at Joshai union of Pangsha thana, bricklaying on a 4-kilometre feeder road linking Balliakandi and Narua and concrete work of the Rajbari-Pangsha road.

It's amazing to see how much people can do with so little. We intend to adopt the experience of BRAC in our country as far as local conditions permit', a BRAC press release quoted Prof Mosisili as saying.

Visiting schools in two villages in Trishal thana, the Lesotho minister was impressed by academic and extra-curricular performances of the students coming from poor families, the release said.

He also met a group of 19 education officials of Eastern and Southern African countries who are now undergoing a BRAC projection course at its Centre for Development Management at Rajendrapur.

Earlier, BRAC Executive Director Fazle Hasan Abed told the Lesotho minister during a meeting at his office that about eight lakh children were now getting education in over 25,000 BRAC-run schools in the country.

The schools are expanding at the rate of 500 students every month, Abed said.

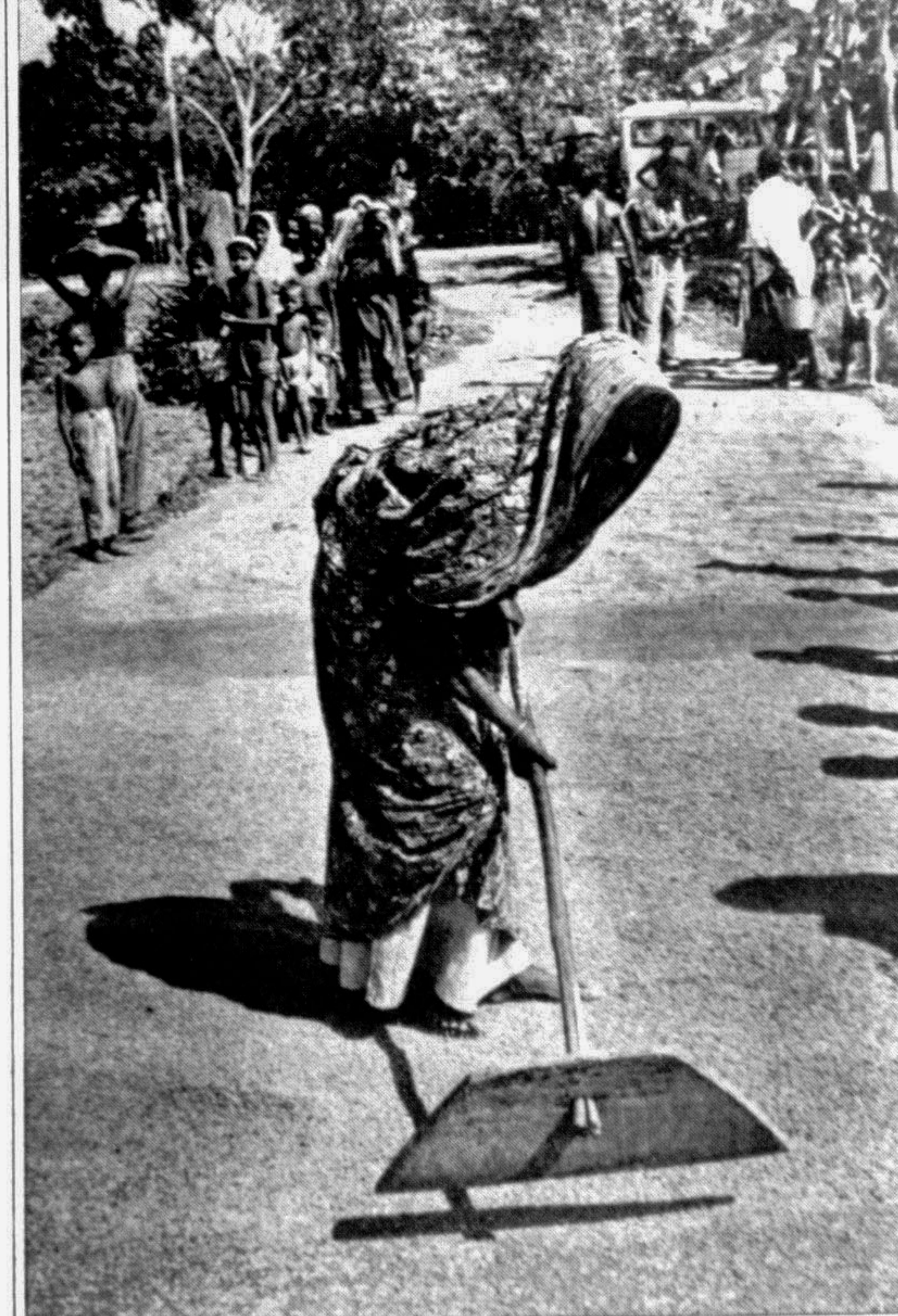
Meanwhile, the BRAC Education Cell in the UNICEF complex in Nairobi started functioning since end of last month. This is a follow-up of a series of visits by African delegations, including a number of ministers who came to see the BRAC education system.

In response to the decision at the African Education Ministers meeting held in Mauritius, BRAC opened the Cell in Nairobi with two of its education specialists.

The cell will assess the need for teacher development, expansion of facilities at grass root level and develop mechanism to improve access, especially of girls.

Initially, BRAC will start its programme in Uganda, Somalia, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia and Namibia to be followed by Lesotho, Comoros, Malawi next year. Five schools will be set up in Uganda at the outset.

Save the Children has opened a number of schools in rural areas in Mali on BRAC model.



Happy Amena Bibi stirs the newly produced aman paddy, left for drying, in front of her house in Rajarhat thana of Kurigram district. — Star photo



JHENIDAH The district Agriculture Extension Department recently brought out a procession on the occasion of rat eradication during aman seasons. — Star photo