

Ten in every 1000 victim of leprosy in tea garden areas

From Rajat Kanti Goswami

MOULVIBAZAR, Apr 7: Ten out of every thousand people in tea garden areas in greater Sylhet region have been attacked by leprosy. Besides this, two out of every thousand people in village areas of the region have also been attacked by this disease according to a recent survey. So about ten thousand people mostly from tea garden areas have been suffering from the disease.

It was revealed in a statistics of the Health Education and Economic Development (HEED) Bangladesh, a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) working in the Sylhet region with its main office at Kamalgonj thana under Moulvibazar district. According to the statistics, the victims are between the age group of 15 and 30. Most of them are male patients.

A source of the HEED said, the organisation has taken up a programme for the welfare of the leprosy patients since 1976. The programme included treatment for the patients at free of cost and to rehabilitate the patients after recovery.

The source added that, the leprosy specialists of HEED have detected 98 unions of eleven thanas under the Sylhet region as leprosy affected area.

To expand treatment facilities for the leprosy patients, three leprosy control sub-centres, one fortnightly treatment centre and 62 monthly treatment centres have been opened by the HEED Bangladesh. Monthly treatment cen-

tres were opened at eleven leprosy affected thanas. These are — eight centres in Kamalgonj thana, 11 in Srimangal thana, three in Moulvibazar sadar thana five in Rajnagar thana, nine in Kulaura thana and three in Baralekha thana. These are under Moulvibazar district. In Habiganj district, 13 centres in Chunarughat thana, four each in Bhahubal and Madhabpur thanas, and one in Habiganj sadar thana. In Sylhet district one centre in Fenchugonj thana.

Above mentioned 62 monthly centres for leprosy treatment have been conducted at different hospitals, thana health complexes and union parishad offices on specific date of each month.

A supervisor working at a leprosy control sub-centre of HEED, Bangladesh at Kamalgonj said, a leprosy patient of the society is not only the sufferer of the disease but also a victim of social superstition. Society, even in this modern age are in belief that the disease is the result of sinful action. So leprosy patients are very sinful in the eye of the society. There is no relation of leprosy with virtue and vice. When a leprosy patient finds no other alternative, he comes

to the leprosy control centres of the HEED Bangladesh for help.

To rehabilitate the leprosy patients who have no scope to return to the society after recovery from the disease, the HEED, Bangladesh has taken up different programmes.

Under the rehabilitation programme, they have been distributing cash grants and interest free loans to the leprosy victims and imparting training to them on handicrafts, dairy-goat and poultry farming etc. After completion of training the HEED, Bangladesh also distributes sewing machines, cows, goats, poultry birds etc and in some cases decorated them with small shop.

According to the source, in 1994 the HEED Bangladesh have distributed interested free loan to six crippled persons, donated loans to 18 persons and artificial legs to another six persons.

A total of 2965 leprosy patients have been cured by the treatments of HEED from 1976 to 1994, while 671 patients are now under treatment and 522 new victims have been detected as leprosy patients from January 1994 to February 1995.



BRAHMANBARIA The BDR of 23 battalion launching an anti smuggling drive at the adjacent areas of the Brahmanbaria Rail-Station on March 25, seized 51 cubic feet of Indian log wood worth about Tk 51 thousand. — Star photo

An important institution badly needs introduction of honours courses.

From Our Correspondent

KURIGRAM, Apr 7: Introduction of Degree (Honours) course in different subjects at the Kurigram Government College has been a long felt demand of the students.

The college was established in 1961 with the noble objective of disseminating the light of higher education to the people of Kurigram, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat districts and char areas of the greater Rangpur district.

The students from these places mostly prefer to join this college and hence they rush here for the purpose of higher education. Every year, a large number of students with good results graduate from the college.

Considering the excellent results the college was elevated to the status of full-fledged degree college in 1963 under the Rajshahi University.

From the onwards, the college gradually became an important institutions in the region.

In 1980, the college was nationalised and since then, the college has seen many students scoring brilliant marks. As many as 12 lakh students within 870 square mile areas of Kurigram district and a vast char areas of greater Rangpur district are directly getting benefit from the college. The college in well linked with these places by roads and rivers.

It may be noted here that due to absence of Honours course at this college, every year a good number of students have to seek admission in other cities far away for Honours courses.

A large number of students who can not afford to compete or in other sense fail to compete in the country's universities are being deprived from seeking admission for higher education.

Kurigram Government College library has got the requisite number of books and materials for honours subjects. Moreover, the college is quite big having enough accommodation including large auditorium, well equipped laboratories and hall rooms and hostel facilities and a large playground. These will, it is widely felt, clearly serve the purpose of honours education if introduced.

A delegation from Rajshahi University (Jatiya University) was not established at that time) paid a visit to the college for a feasibility study for introducing honours courses in different subjects. But later, the issue was dropped due to the reasons better known to them.

Two sentenced to life for raping and killing minor girl

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 7: The Additional District and Sessions Judge, First Court and Special Tribunal-II Sylhet, Sunil Chandra Paul while passing his judgement in a sensational case of Biswanath thana found two persons guilty and sentenced them to suffer life term imprisonment on charge of killing a minor girl after raping her. The court also fined them Taka one thousand each in default to suffer three months more.

The prosecution case in brief is that, at about 1-30 pm on the 9th October of 1991 Rokeya Begum, 10 daughter of one Habib Ullah, of village was forcibly taken to a nearby field of the victim's house by three persons. They raped her one after another causing serious injuries. The victim succumbed to her injuries after several hours. Rokeya's father, Habib Ullah lodged a case in this connection with the police. The police after holding investigations submitted chargesheet against three persons.

The court after examining all the records and witnesses found Nizam, son of Kudrat Ullah alias Bhola of village Atapur and Tosir Ali son of late Mashraf Ali of village Bhatshala guilty and passed the aforesaid sentence. The court acquitted the other accused person in the same case.

Our Correspondent From Jhenidah adds: A minor girl was allegedly raped by three miscreants at village Noadagram in Mohespur thana of the district recently.

Reports say, while the girl, Rupali, nine was returning home from a nearby shop at

about 8 pm, three miscreants took her to a nearby road and repeatedly raped Rupali one after another. Hearing hue and cry of Rupali, some people came to rescue her and caught two of them namely Siddique and Sanwar on the spot. Another managed to escape. The villagers handed over Siddique and Sanwar to police and sent Rupali to Jhenidah hospital. Her condition was stated to be critical.

A case was lodged with Mohespur thana in this connection.

Adulterated cement bags flood markets

PATUAKHALI, Apr 7: Adulterated cement has flooded the local markets as the price of the main construction material registered a sharp rise, reports UNB.

Market sources said adulterated cement is being sold between Tk 250 and 260 instead of normal price of pure cement of Tk 200.

Local people said only low quality Egle Star and Tiger brand cement is available in the market whereas other good quality cement has disappeared.

Side by side the prices of bricks and other construction materials have also registered a sharp rise. Suppliers said the price of mud has shot up by 50 per cent due to various reasons. At present per thousand cft mud is being supplied at a rate of Tk 3000 as against Tk 2000.

Due to the prevailing crisis of construction materials the construction work in the region has been facing a serious set back.

Two die in separate incidents

DINAJPUR, Apr 7: Two people died in separate incidents in the district on Tuesday, police and hospital sources said, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said, Shyamal, 22, son of Debendranath of Karala in Kaharol thana took poison on Monday following a family feud. He was admitted to the hospital in a critical condition where he succumbed on Tuesday.

Another victim, Rafiqul Islam, 25, son of Bhoju of Balubari in the town received serious injuries when a motor cycle knocked him near the Women's College on Monday.

He was rushed to the district general hospital where he succumbed on Tuesday. Two cases were filed with sadar thana in this connection.

Frequent disruption in power supply in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 7: Frequent power disruption has been causing extreme misery to public life. Irrigation and production in agricultural and industrial sectors have been facing set back due to continuous power disruption for hours together in the district.

It is learnt that more than 14 megawatts of power supply is required for Sirajganj districts alone to run the feeders of Sirajganj town, Raipur Quami Jute Mills, Rahmatganj Spinning Mills, Kallbari, Mirpur, Kazipur, Belkuchi and Kamarkhanda.

The main station can supply only six to seven megawatts of electricity every day. Despite short supply, the Sirajganj Power Development Board (PDB) supplies three megawatts electricity regularly for the Pali Bidyut Samity PBS at Ullapara. Only four megawatts of power is supplied for about

12 feeder lines instead of required ten megawatts. Consequently, load shedding have been inevitable specially in the thana level supply network. Sirajganj supply station of PDB is interested to continue supply in the town and the adjacent areas to avoid untoward incidents, it was learnt from official sources.

In the thana level supply network, electricity is available for maximum five hours a day and every day supply is suspended at six in the evening and resumes after 10 PM which can not fulfill the minimum demand of the domestic consumers. The SSC examinees are the worst sufferers due to the reason. Irrigation in the IRRi and Boro Crop land were also hampered and the machineries are affected due to fluctuation in voltage of power supply.

The large industries can not run in three shifts affecting production. Local distribution offices of PDB who have nothing to do except doing maintenance work and collection of bills, are to face the consumers.

The domestic consumers of PDB are to pay minimum bills for 60 units every month even offer consuming 15 to 20 units it was alleged. The PDB covers system loss by realising excess money in disguise of minimum charges. Other than short supply, fluctuation in voltage also affects the electronic goods causing monetary loss to the consumers. When contacted, a number of domestic consumers expressed deep concern over such abnormal short supply of power. Even on March 29, some processionists at Belkuchi PDB office attempted to manhandle the employees demanding regular supply, during load shedding hours.

All of them were local leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra Maitree.

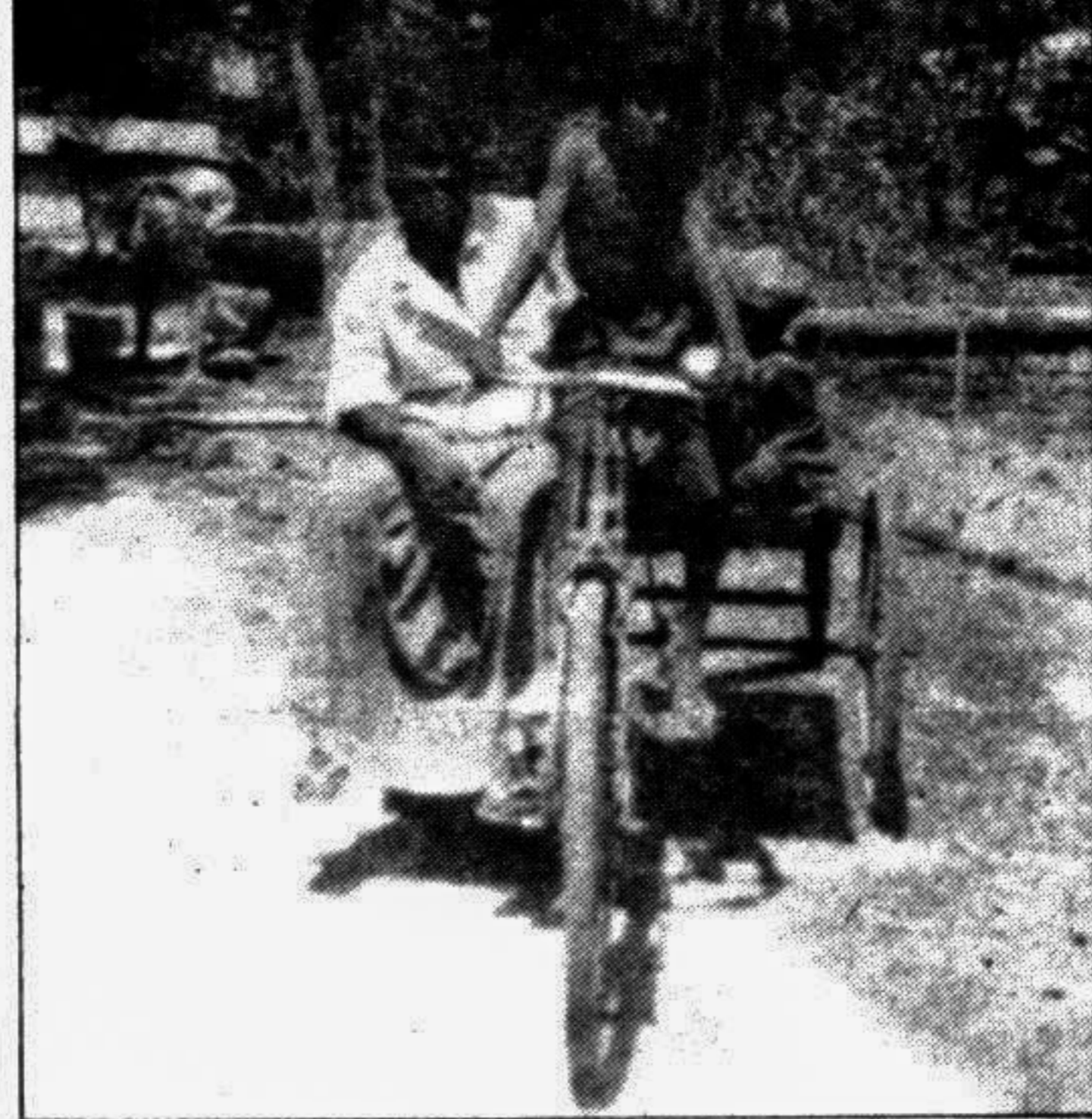
Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader Shah Jahan Nur Mithu was seriously injured in a clash between Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal and Bangladesh Chhatra Maitree at Arappur bus stand on September 4, 1991 and succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Chest Diseases Hospital on September 27.

The accused were defended by advocates Saad Ahmed and Advocate Shariful Islam while the prosecution case was conducted by Public Prosecutor M A Ansari.

Police said Nurul Karim Munshi, 40, an employee of Nizam Brothers, a business centre of CI sheet of the bazar in Shonagazi thana was killed by the miscreants when he was coming from Chittagong with CI sheet loaded truck.

Police recovered the body of an employee of a business centre of Baktra Munshi bazar from Lalpur of Feni bypass road on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said Nurul Karim Munshi, 40, an employee of Nizam Brothers, a business centre of CI sheet of the bazar in Shonagazi thana was killed by the miscreants when he was coming from Chittagong with CI sheet loaded truck.



JHENIDAH: Rafiqul Islam pulling his rickshaw-van on Saikupa-Garagonj road. — Star photo

Poverty forced Islam to drive rickshaw-van

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, Apr 7: Only poverty compelled Rafiqul Islam to pull rickshaw-van at the age of nine despite government ban on child labour. Rafiqul may be seen with his van on Saikupa-Garagonj or Saikupa Rovera roads frequently.

Rafiqul's father, Serajul Mollah who is a cycle and rickshaw maker in village Kabirpur said he earns Taka between 30 and 40 a day which is not sufficient at all to meet his family requirements. As a result he was compelled to employ his child Rafiqul to pull rickshaw-van.

Rafiqul, the little boy, pulls his van dawn to dusk and earns

Taka 30 to 35 a day and hands over the amount to his father.

Talking to Rafiqul it was learnt he went to school about three years ago which he really enjoyed but he had to give it up as his father asked him not to go to school anymore. As a result, he could not be promoted to class two from class one.

Now Rafiqul is a rickshaw-van puller like other child labourers whose future do not look very bright though child labour is strictly prohibited according to International Labour Organisation (ILO), but who will save the children like Rafiqul?

Failed lover shot and killed in Pabna

PABNA, Apr 7: A persuasive lover, who despite refusal from his beloved offered his love again and again, was cruelly shot and killed allegedly by the brothers of his dream girl at a village in sadar thana Wednesday night, reports UNB.

Abdul Quyum, 25, the ill-fated suitor was allegedly shot at 9:30 pm at Bangabaria village when he was passing by the house of his beloved — Sufia Khatun, 18, police said.

Quyum, son of Abdul Kadir Biswas, fell desperately in love with his neighbour and tried repeatedly in vain to gain her love. But she refused him flatly.

The unlucky Romeo kept on proposing and at one stage Sufia became irritated and informed the matter to her brothers. Afterwards when the angry brothers saw him passing by their house they allegedly shot Quyum to death, local people said.

Sufia, a beauty in the area, is a student of degree course at Edward College.

A case has been filed with the local thana in this connection. Meanwhile, police have arrested Saifur Rahman, a relative of Sufia and a resident of the village.

The brothers are absconding since the incident.

VC's absence affecting office job at IU

KUSHTIA, Apr 7: Administrative function of the Islamic University (IU) has been suffering badly since the Vice Chancellor's office was put under lock and key one and a half months back, reports UNB.

Vice Chancellor Prof MA Hamid was forced to leave the campus by the students who had been demanding his removal since long. The VC's office was locked by All Party Students Unity (APSU) of the university.

APSU and Islami Chhatra Shibir have been demanding the VC's removal accusing him of malpractice in appointing teachers and admission of students. They also charged him with administrative corruption.

Prof MA Hamid had been appointed as VC of the university on June 18, '91 for a four-year term.

Property worth Tk 20 lakh gutted in Dinajpur

DINAJPUR, Apr 7: Eighty houses were burnt down and property worth about Tk 20 lakh damaged in a devastating fire in Khatirbandar thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the fire originated from a house at Paikpara village and soon engulfed the area. Five cattle-heads, 12 goats and a large number of poultry birds were roasted alive in the fire.

A young wife also suffered burn injuries, they said.

The affected families are now residing under open sky and sought government help.



SHERPUR: The picture shows a number of corrugated tins are lying unused by the side of JDK road belonging to Roads & Highways Division. Such tins are reportedly stolen from different places especially on highways which can fetch handsome amount of money. A bundle of such tin cost between Taka 10,000 and 12,000 in the local market. — Star photo by Ratan Chowdhury



SYLHET: Mushtaque Qureshi, Councillor of West Minister Council, London UK speaking at a function arranged for open discussion with the newly elected chairman and commissioners of Sylhet Pourashava on Sunday last. Badaruddin Kamran, Chairman of pourashava and Dr NH Qureshi also spoke among others while AH Saadat Khan presided. — Star photo

Further deterioration in law, order in Sirajganj dist

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 7: The overall law and order in Sirajganj district have deteriorated specially in the rural areas. Immoral and anti-social activities have alarmingly increased yet in the monthly meeting to review law and order, the district level officials expressed deep satisfaction.

It is gathered that feud over simple issues among the rival villagers and student organisations is on increase in the rural areas. On March 26, during the Independence Day function, a group of students identified as the supporters of JCD attacked the Principal of Belkuchi College who escaped marginally. Latter on, clash broke out among supporters of JCD and BCL (S-P) in which cracks were blasted and sharp weapons were used. Five persons were injured in the incident during the clash, police could not play any role in the incident. On the following day

the office of thana Awami League was damaged. A case was lodged by JCD with Belkuchi police.

Other than clashes, anti-social and immoral activities have been alarmingly rise in different thana areas including Ullapara Tarash, Shahzadpur, Belkuchi and Chowhalli. Gambling, obscene film shows on VCR and selling of drug have been rampant the different public places of the aforesaid thanas. Day long VCR shows continue by wide publicity through hand-written and printed posters. Four mini-halls for VCR shows have been set up at Shohagpur hat under Belkuchi thana. It is alleged that obscene films are shown at the dead of night regularly.

Gambling is also going on unabated in disguise of so called 'Ananda MeLa' by publicity through loudspeakers. Drugs are available in different shops of the villages, it is also alleged.

9 pry schools to be repaired in Patuakhali

PATUAKHALI, Apr 7: Facilities Department has taken up a programme to reconstruct and repair nine government primary schools in sadar thana, officials said, reports UNB.

According to official sources, an amount of Tk 34.65 lakh will be spent to complete the work in the current fiscal year. The schools are: Pakhia Primary School, West Kuripaika Primary School, Bhailla primary School, Badura-Srirampur Primary School, Bara Bigha Primary School, East Hetalia Primary School, North Muradia Primary School, Shangi Primary School and Khalishakhali Primary School.

These schools were damaged due to natural calamities and lack of proper maintenance and care. So long primary education was hampering greatly.

With the implementation of the programme primary education will get further boost in the thana.