

**Malaria claims 321 in Sylhet, Sunamgunj**

**No sign of improvement in affected areas**

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, June 5: Though the Health Department has taken up some measures to check further outbreak of Malaria, the situation is yet to show any sign of improvement in the districts of Sylhet and Sunamgunj.

The killer disease has already claimed more than seven hundred lives in the region, sources informed. Besides, more than fifty thousand others were new suffering from the disease in different thanas.

The overall situation has taken a serious turn due to the absence of sufficient arrangement to take preventive steps and providing necessary treatment for the patients. Most of the patients are dying as they can not reach the Thana Health Complex or the makeshift medical camps set up in some areas mainly due to the bad communication system. It may be stated here that, most of the affected areas are in the remote villages where even smooth road communication or easy riverine communication is absent.

Besides, the economic condition of those people is also not sound. People in thousands in number have become panicky as the killer disease had broken out in a quasi-epidemic form in the region. Besides, the disease has been spreading fast.

According to the reports received from different areas, the total number of deaths caused by the killer disease now stands at 702, in the region. However, the government sources confirmed only 321 deaths adding that, the number of malaria patients would be about thirty thousand.

But the actual number of patients would be more than fifty thousand. The number was also on increase, sources claimed.

The official control Room opened at the Civil Surgeon office in Sylhet confirmed only 66 deaths in Gowainghat, 41 in Jaintapur, 13 in Companyganj and one in the Sylhet sadar thana, till May 30. But the unofficial sources reported 89 deaths in Gowainghat, 65 in Jaintapur, 55 in Companyganj, one in Kanaighat and one in sadar thana. The official control room also reported that only 28,349 people had been attacked by the disease in the four thanas of the district. It also informed that 14 makeshift Medical camps had also started working in different areas.

The source further informed that, Blood had been collection from 8880 suspected patients in the four affected thanas. Of this, Test of 7963 persons had already been done which showed a total of 1263 people were carrying the malarial germ named PV, while 456 others were carrying the germ named PF.

In the district of Sunamgunj, the killer disease Cerebral Malaria has claimed at least five hundred people in Dearabazar, Tahirpur, Dharampasha, Biswambharpur and sadar, thana. The official sources however confirmed only 200 deaths. It includes, 55 were in Ranagrachar union of sadar thana, 39 in Darabazar, 36 in Dhramapasha, 32 in Tahirpur and 36 in Biswambharpur thanas. The source further informed that, Blood Test of 26,113 people in these five thanas

showed that 9213 people had been carrying the germs of Malaria. A control Room had also been started in the Civil Surgeons office in Sunamgunj.

The Director-General of Health, professor AK Shamsuddin Siddiquee visited some of the Malaria affected areas in Sylhet and Sunamgunj districts this week. On his way back to the Capital, the DG informed the newsmen about the measures taken up to bring the situation under control. He also said that, Spraying of DDT had already been started, as well as sufficient stock of necessary medicines had also been ensured.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Minister for Health Sirajul Haque while visiting some Malaria affected areas in the Sunamgunj sadar thana expressed his dissatisfaction over the activities of the health workers. He also warned them and said stringent measures would be taken up against the workers who would be found not serving properly in Malaria Prevention programme. The Health Deputy Minister ordered for immediate sinking of 200 tubewells in Rangrchar union and ordered for sanctioning an Ambulance for carrying the Malaria patients to the health centres or medical camps from the villages. He also sat with the health workers and officials in meeting to review the latest situation on Saturday in Sunamgunj.

Meanwhile, treatment of the patients is being greatly hampered in the remote villages mainly due to the poor communication system. There are allegations against the health workers that, they were

not visiting the affected villages. A number of union parishad chairmen had also brought the allegations about the activities of the health workers.

A number of Physicians working in the affected areas while talking to this correspondent said that, when a rare type of mosquito named Maculeetus bites someone, the patient becomes unconscious and brain haemorrhage causes his death with 24 to 72 hours. The germ carried by maculeetus mosquito is termed Felciferum, said a physician. They also alleged that, treatment of patients is being greatly hampered due to the absence of necessary transport. The authorities are yet to arrange boats for the medical men. As most of the affected villages are located in the remote areas, where boat is the only means of communication.

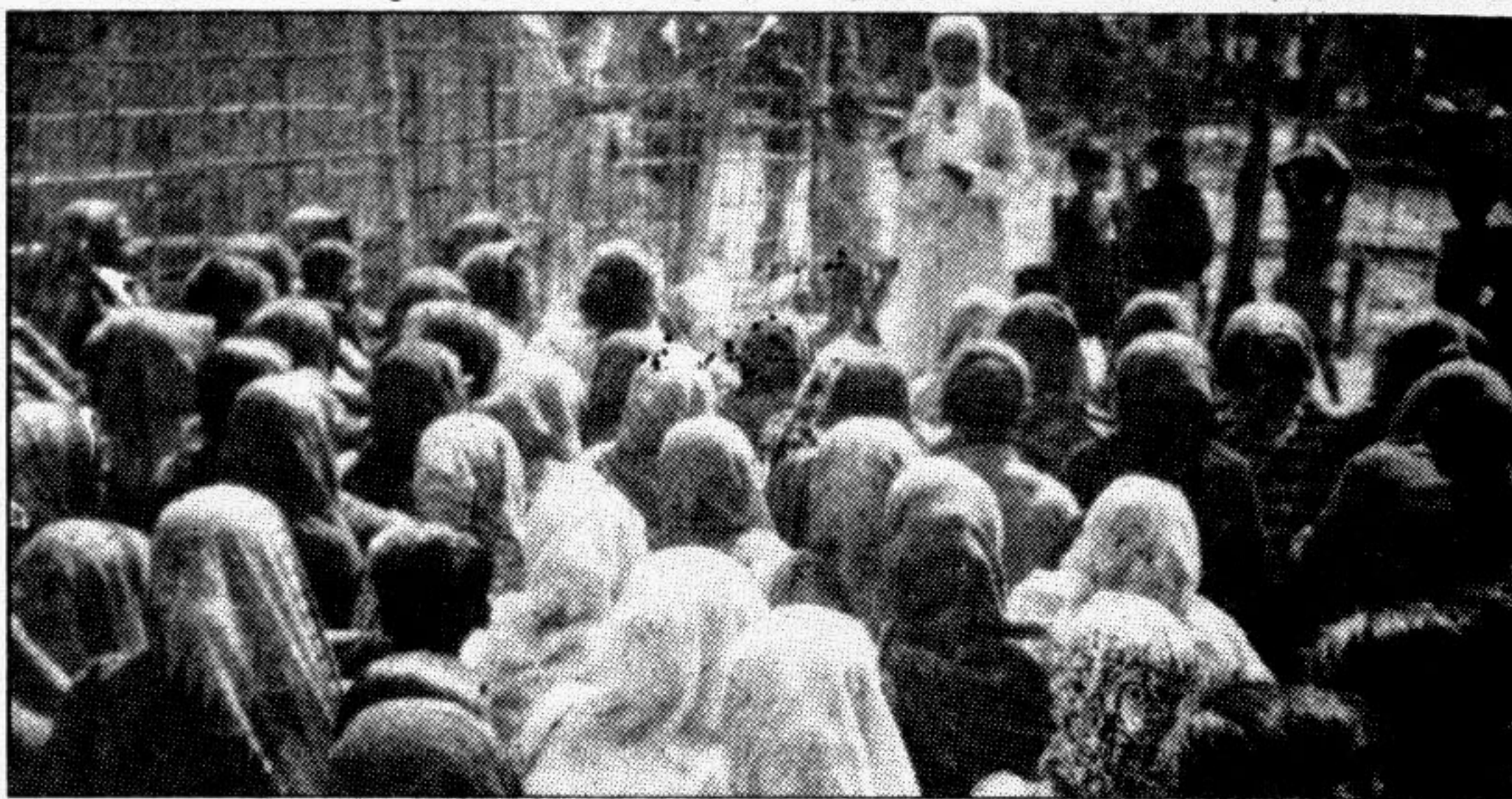
The Deputy Civil Surgeon of Sunamgunj, Dr Abdul Karim told BSS about 70 per cent of the people who once received treatment are again reporting to the doctors with malaria fever, this is because they did not complete the course of malaria drug they were given earlier. Repeated bites of malaria germ carrying mosquitoes are also causing the reemergence of malaria germs in the body, he observed.

The Civil Surgeon of Sylhet Dr G M Mahmud also described the same experience. He, however, said directives have been given to the health workers to properly motivate the affected people so that they would complete their drug courses.

**Serving the distressed people**

From Delwar Kabir

**A man who once thought of working for the poor. Determination, patience, devotion and honesty gave him a successful organisation which is now helping the poor and at the same time earning on an average Tk 22 lakh a year. He had to cross many hurdles to reach his destination.**



JHENIDAH: A trainer of SRIZONY motivating her group members about sanitation.

JHENIDAH, June 5: Harun-Ur-Rashid a young man of Jhenidah who earlier served as a bank employee suddenly decided to serve the distressed people who had been living under poverty and organised an NGO namely SRIZONY in 1985. Rashid established a club to provide local young in vocational sides. After a few years, in 1992 he wished to turn the club into an NGO and started works as a Women Development Project (WDP) financed by Dutch government.

Earlier, Rashid, the Director of SRIZONY placed his appeals to some donor agencies for financial support. A number of projects like Maternity, Child Health and Family Planning (MCH & FP), Adult Education, Credit Support Program, Water and Sanitation, Ideal Village (Adarsha Gram) Project, Income-Generating Activities for Women (AGAW) Food for Works (FFW) including Road Plantation and Derelict Ponds Re-excavation Program, Mass Education and Children's Schools attracting programs were approved. All these programs contained Taka two lakh to fifty lakh, he informed. Just after introducing the projects Rashid was highly glad and engaged himself to stand the SRIZONY as a sustainable organisation to help the poor and underprivileged people towards improvement of their overall socio-economic conditions, Department of Social Welfare, Department of Family Planning and NGO Affairs Bureau gave SRIZONY legal status or registration, Rashid informed.

About objectives of SRIZONY the Director informed that the objectives of his organisation was to help raise consciousness and awareness among the target beneficiaries about prevailing social system and the positions, to build-up self-respects, self-image and develop confidence and creativity among them to identify peoples socio-economic problems and develop their capacity of overcoming the same, to provide literacy and technical education to the illiterate target people, to ensure basic health services for the target people and to respond to the needs of victims of catastrophes, Rashid mentioned.

SRIZONY has received memberships of Association for Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) - Dhaka ICDDR-B - Dhaka ELCI - Nairobi, Kenya. Development network of SRIZONY is presently covering a total of 205 villages of 25 Unions under five thanas of Jhenidah district and the whole program has been divided into seven administrative areas, the Director said.

Under different projects and programs, 48 male and 490 female groups have been organised with 1,080 male and 11,480 female. These groups were organised with poor and underprivileged people both male and female.

To remove illiteracy SRIZONY had taken four types of programs like Adult Literacy Projects (ALP), Children's School Attracting Programs (CSAP), Mass Education Pro-

grams (MEP) and Adult Education Program (AEP). ALP is a two years project started in 1994, presently operating 25 Adult Literacy and Functional Education Literacy and Functional Education Classes, it contains 625 illiterate group members.

Children's Schools Attracting Programs is also a two year's project contains various programs like sports, games, cultural functions etc. Its aim is to attract the children at schools and reduce the rate of dropout. 5,100 learners of 17 primary schools are the direct beneficiaries of the project which is a government collaboration program.

Mass Education Program is also a two years program started in 1994 and is comprised of two programs. Oper-

group members. SRIZONY charges only 14.4 per cent service charges on loans which is comparatively lesser than other non government organisations as other NGOs charge service charges at the rate between 15 and 22 per cent per year from the loanees, said Nurul Islam, Consultant of SRIZONY. From the service charge SRIZONY got a sum of Taka 1,25,000 per month and its net income through loan distribution is not less than Taka 22 lakh per year, the consultant informed.

Food for Works program is comprised of road side tree plantation and derelict pond rehabilitation program. SRIZONY planted 95 thousand trees along 95 kilometres long roads and caretaking the plants by 190 incentive paid

ure. The CMO said, they installed 38 hand tubewells in 38 villages, set up two V S centers through which 400 sanitary latrines are produced every year.

Adarshagram project is a government collaboration project which is known as cluster village to improve the socio-economic conditions of the underprivileged people of an area.

Nutrition program is a three years project of SRIZONY started recently. 2000 group members families will be provided with necessary technical and small credit support undertaking kitchen gardening activities. It will operate 20 Child Feeding Centres in 20 villages every year and feed 300 acute malnourished children for 55 days towards reclamation of their nutritional status, the Director added.

Kohinoor Begum, 25 mother of three daughters of village Porahati in Jhenidah sadar thana took Taka three thousand as loan against her small weaving industry from SRIZONY one year ago. She repaid the loan a few weeks ago. Kohinoor Begum said, taking the loan she was able to run her family smoothly.

Marufa Khatun, 21 another woman of the same village took Taka 2000 as loan one year ago and repaid the same. Now she earns Taka sixty to seventy a day with her weaving industry. She produces lungi, saree, towels and mosquito net herself, Marufa said.

Bisakha Rani, 35 of village Porahati said that she took Taka 3500 from SRIZONY to purchase a cow. Now the cow is giving four litres of milk.



JHENIDHA: Mustafizur Rahman, Manager, SRIZONY handing over loan money to a distressed women.

ating 15 child education centres and educating 450 pre-school children and operating education centres for the children age between 6 and 10 group and educating 1,800 children.

Adult education program is one year pilot project started in August last year operating 30 Adult Literacy Classes educate 750 illiterate target women.

Under the income-generating program to make the organisation self supporting, SRIZONY has been cultivating fish in a big pond on 75 bighas of waterbodies at village Shibnagar in Kaliganj thana. Last year SRIZONY earned a net profit of Taka 2,90,000 and the authorities are expecting at least Taka five lakh from the same big pond.

On 12 bighas of land SRIZONY has established a nursery at villages Porahati in Jhenidah sadar thana. From the nursery they earned net profit of Taka 2,50,000 and they are expecting a net profit of Taka four lakh this season, authorities informed.

Group members of the various programs are provided with necessary technical and credit support for undertaking and operating income-generating activities. The organisation provided an amount of credit Taka 98,47,500 among 3927

caretakers. They re-excavated 20 derelict ponds and after re-excavation allowed 765 group members for cultivation of fish in those ponds. Slum Development Program is an integrated program of SRIZONY. It covers eight slums of Jhenidah town operating eight child education centres and educating 240 out of school going children. It also provided credit support to 280 women group members for operating income-generating activities.

The organisation provided primary health, maternity, child health and family planning services to women and children of targeted 5,200 families in 24 villages through a stationary clinic, eight satellite clinics and 24 village-based intensive door-to-door net work services.

Dr S M Mahmud Ali, Chief Medical Officer (CMO), SRIZONY said that they had established a private hospital titled SRIZONY Hospital on Jhenidah-Jessore highway recently to serve the common people at an affordable rate. The hospital was inaugurated by Dr ATM Rahman, Civil Surgeon, Jhenidah on April 20 this year. One Medical Officer (MO), one Diploma nurse, one Birth Attendant (TBA), one night guard and a sweeper are always at the service of the patients against a negligible fig-

Her net profit from milk sale is Taka 25 per day which helps her family to run smoothly.

Regarding fund sources, Harun Ur Rashid, Director of SRIZONY said that in 1994 they had mobilised resources both in kind and in cash equivalent to Taka 15,80,8726 for its various projects and programs. Sources-wise resources in mobilisation percentage was foreign donations 68.00, government contributions 28.78 and SRIZONY's own fund contribution 3.22, Rashid informed.

Regarding expansion of projects, Rashid said, they have been running their activities in five thanas out of six thanas of the district in Jhenidah sadar, Harinakundu, Saikupa, Mohespur and Kaliganj. They have plans to expand activities in Magura, Kushiya and surrounding areas as early as possible.

Talking to this correspondent the Director said that at first they had to face a lot of problems from the common people specially the people who lived under poverty. They mainly believed the fundamentalists and village matbars (leader) were after their money. But things gradually changed with time. SRIZONY may be one of the biggest income generating projects in the region.

**Project to raise 50 crore fish fry in Tangail**

TANGAIL, June 5: Social Development Sangsad (SDS) a Tangail based NGO has taken up a programme to raise at least 50 crore fish fry this season through its modern hatchery at Charabari some 8 kms from Tangail town, reports BSS.

An SDS source said that the organisation was raising fry of different varieties carps, rui, katla, mrigel, kalibaus fishes. Meanwhile over one crore fry were raised and sold, besides the organisation is raising fishes in 15 large ponds. There is a great demand for the fry in the district, the source added.

**5 killed, 30 hurt in Pabna road accident**

PABNA, June 5: Five people were killed and 30 others were injured in a road mishap at Shahidnagar in Bera thana of the district early Saturday reports UNB.

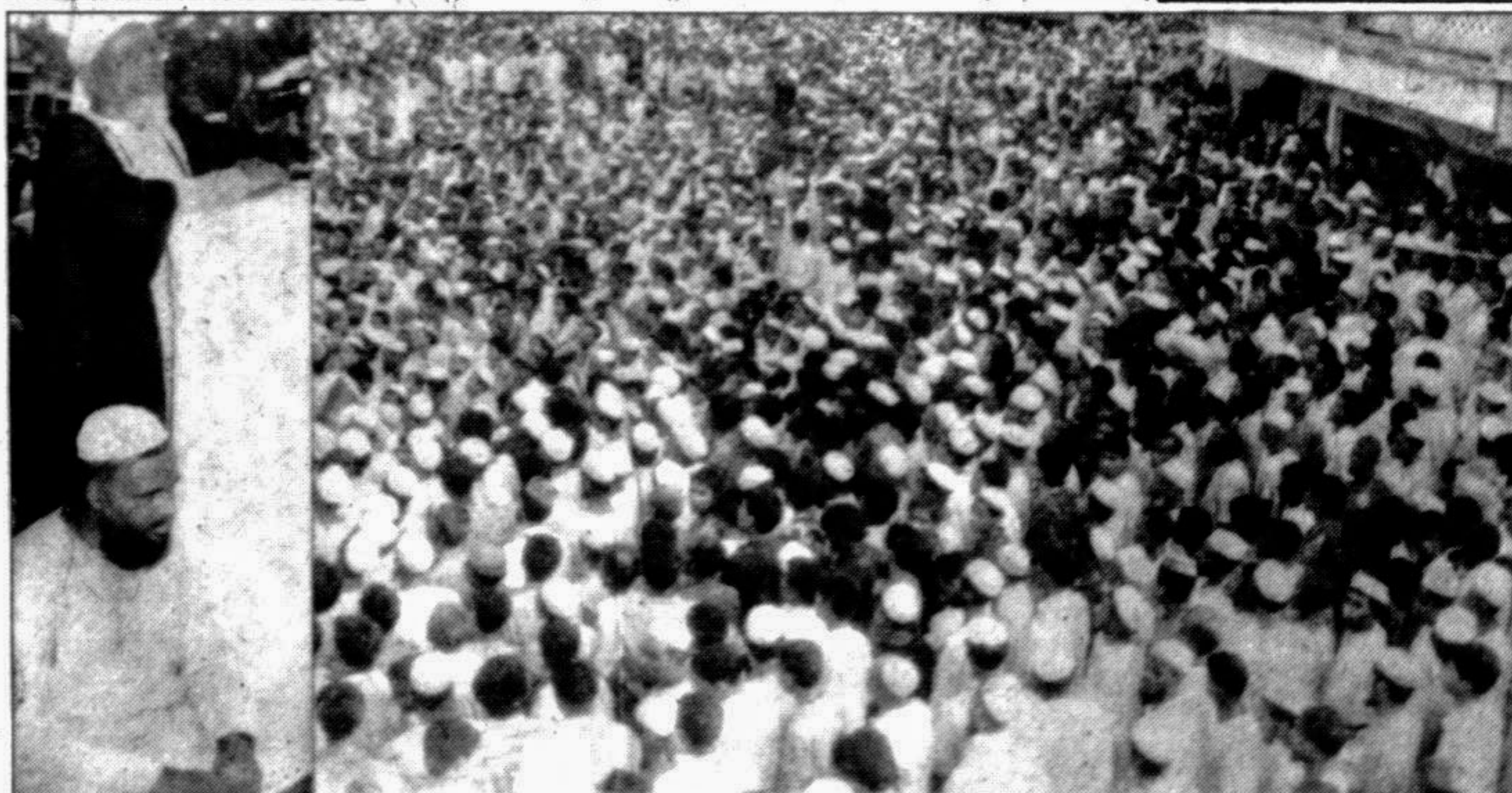
The deceased are: Hatem Ali, 50; Samad Fakir, 35; Karim Uddin, 50; Asadullah, 25, and a 30-year old unidentified man. Three of the victims died on the spot and two others died on way to hospital. The accident occurred when a Thakurgaon bound truck collided with a bus on the Nagarbari-Bogra road at 11 am today.

Of the injured, three were admitted to the Bera Thana Health Complex. They are Dulal, 25, Kayem Uddin, 23, and Arshad Ali, 35.

A case was filed with the Bera Police station. However, the drivers and helpers of both the vehicles escaped.

Another report adds: Three people were killed when a lightning struck them this afternoon at village Hatbaria in Sathia thana.

The victims - Santos Khan, 50, Abdul Karim 40, and Abdul Hamid, 27, - were working at a crop-field.



SYLHET: Chief of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish, Maulana Azizul Haque addressing a public rally at Jakiganj thana to mark protest against the construction of Barak Dam in Assam.

**Lack of marketing facility Huge quantity of milk wasted in S-dists**

PATUAKHALI, June 5: Lack of storage, processing and marketing facilities about 7 lakh maunds of buffalo milk are being wasted in southern region of the country every year, reports UNB.

According to a local estimate, there are about 1.5 lakh buffaloes in char lands of Patuakhali, Barguna and Bhola districts. Of them, 96,000 in Patuakhali, 1,500 in Bhola and 52,500 in Barguna. Forty per cent of these are milch buffaloes.

Due to its hardworking nature the people of the char areas are rearing buffalo for cultivation.

A milch buffalo gives milk for six months a year at a rate of four to seven litres per day.

Due to its excessive fat content people generally avoid taking buffalo milk. Besides, for want of proper transportation facilities milk from char areas are not collected for sale in the towns.

In some places small amount of curd and ghee are made from the milk. At Taltoli bazar in Amtali thana of Barguna district ghee is made from buffalo milk locally. But this ghee is not fit for preservation for long time due to its poor quality.

Local people said if a milk processing factory could be established in the area the buffalo milk could be well utilized for commercial purpose and the farmers could earn a lot from it.

**Smuggled goods seized in B'baria**

BRAHMANBARIA, June 5: Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled Indian goods worth Tk 1.33 lakh from different border areas of the district recently, reports UNB.

The smuggled goods included phenisidyl, wine, spare parts of vehicle, agarbatti, cosmetics and ornaments.

Members of 23 battalions raided Bishupur, Jeliapara and Alinagar areas and recovered the goods. The contrabands were deposited with the customs godown.

Another report adds: One taka coin is being smuggled out to India causing acute scarcity in the local markets.

Some businessmen of India make ornaments by using one taka coin, local people alleged.

**Hundreds of HSC examinees may miss exam this year**

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 5: Hundreds of examinees of the forthcoming HSC examination may not be allowed to appear in the examination this year due to registration irregularities and change of colleges without prior permission from the Education Board.

A list of such examinees is being prepared by the Board - a Jessore Education Board source disclosed to this correspondent.

They will start sending admit cards from mid June - the source added. HSC examination is scheduled to be held from July 6 next.

Besides, many examinees have already brought out procession held meetings handed over statement to local administration demanding issuing of admit cards to all examinees in different district headquarters.

In Barisal many HSC examinees brought out a procession Sunday and held press conference Monday evening.

**Find diplomatic solution to halt construction of Barak Dam: Say speakers**

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, June 5: Speakers at a big meeting at the thana headquarters of Jakiganj Thursday called upon the government to take diplomatic solutions against the construction of the Barak Dam in the Indian state of Assam.

The central Ameer of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish, Maulana Azizul Haque attended it as chief guest while Maulana Obaidul Haque, MP, Maulana Habibur Rahman and others spoke. Maulana Abdul Gaffar presided.

About fifteen thousand people from different parts of the district attended the rally. The speakers said India was engaged in conspiracy against Bangladesh. It has been constructing the Barak Dam at Timpakukh, the originating point of the two rivers, Surma and Kushiya, flowing through the

greater Sylhet region. On completion, the dam would cause gradual desertification of four districts of greater Sylhet region, they apprehended.

The speakers criticising the role of both the government and opposition parties alleged that, none of them were raising the question in the parliament. Even they were totally silent over the issue, mysteriously the speakers asserted.

They also called upon the people to launch a united movement over the Barak Dam issue. Otherwise, the existence of about one crore people would be in danger, they warned.

The speakers declared that the Indian High Commission would be gheraoed to press the demand on July 7.

**Pregnant wife beaten to death**

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, June 5: A young housewife was beaten to death at village Dawadari under Kanaighat thana in the hands of her husband and his relatives.

According to the reports, the victim Piara Begum, had an exchange of hot words with her husband. At one stage, he and his relatives including mother gave her a beating on the night following Tuesday. The victim died in the next morning. Piara Begum was pregnant, it is learnt.



SYLHET: Sylhet Zila Babyshahi Oikyo Parishad brought out a procession to protest the deteriorating law and order situation, recently.