

Follow Sakina Khatun

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, June 7: A husband was awarded three years imprisonment on charge of demanding dowry from his wife recently.

The case in brief, Sakina Khatun, 21, daughter of Ibadat Munshi of village Kalamankhali was married to accused Mizanur Rahman of village Bashtol in Magura district five years back.

Rahman was given Taka seven thousand as dowry at the time of wedding and Sakina's father assured his son-in-law that dowry money for the rest seven thousand would be handed over to him later on.

But the ill-fated father could not pay the money in time. On Feb 6, 1993 Mizanur Rahman tortured his wife Sakina Khatun and sent Sakina along with her three-year old daughter to her father's house.

Finding no other alternative, Sakina Khatun lodged a case against her husband in the court of Thana Magistrate in Jhenidah.

After thorough investigation Naimi Ranjan Basak, class one Magistrate awarded the accused, Mizanur Rahman to suffer three years in jail. Another accused Madhu Mollah was released from the charge.

Lathials swoop on farmers: 20 persons injured

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 7: At least 20 persons were injured, eight of them seriously following a clash between farmers and lathials at Balipara char under sadar thana of Pirojpur district on Monday.

Police and witnesses said, a gang of lathials numbering around one hundred swooped on the landless farmers of Balipara char. The farmers resisted them and a clash ensued.

During the hour-long clash, at least 20 persons including women were injured. Eight of the critically injured were identified as Abu Taleb, 33, Chandrabhan, 30, Saburjan, 45, Ohab Khan, 60, Sajeda Khatun, 60, Zohara Khatun, 35, Parul Bibi, 35, and Nesar Farazi. They were admitted to Pirojpur Sadar Hospital.

Mentionable, to grab the khas land of over one thousand acres at Balipara char, lathials with the help of local landlords frequently attack the helpless farmers who number about one thousand families.

Cross border dacoits held in Sundarbans

SATKHIRA, June 7: Forest guards in the Sundarbans arrested four Indian nationals on Saturday after a gunbattle while they were committing dacoity, reports UNB.

The dacoits were identified as Joydev, Tahazzaz, Azizur and Rezaul. All of them hailed from Surupkhata thana of 24 Pargana district of West Bengal.

Forest guards sources said the dacoits entered into the Bangladesh water and attacked a fishing boat near the Sundarbans area.

On getting the information, the guards swooped on them and caught them while they were trying to escape by jumping in the river after exchanging gunfire.

About 2.5 lakh families do not use latrines in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, June 7: About 2 lakh 50 thousand families in Gaibandha district do not use any kind of latrines which contributes to the pollution of social environment and caused health hazard.

The inmates of these families use bamboo groves adjacent to dwelling houses, crop fields and river side during the call of nature. Even they use water from nearby river, pools and ponds. This practice has sharply increased intestinal diseases.

According to a statistics a total of 3,72,467 families live in Gaibandha district. Of them 3 lakh 47 thousand live in village areas and the remaining 25,467 families are town dwellers.

Most of the village dwellers do not possess any latrine in their homes. In town areas, about 7 per cent dwellers do not have any latrine of their own. They either use neighbour's latrine or river side during the early hours of day. In many residences of town dwellers a trend of using open latrine is still in practice, this system multiplies the pollution of local environment. These kutcha latrines should be replaced by sanitary latrines through the initiative of local pourasava.

Electricity bills worth Tk 26.19 cr remain unrealised in greater Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, June 7: A total amount of Taka 26 crore 19 lakh and 57 thousand has been lying unrealised in the four districts of greater Sylhet region as electricity bill. The Powers Development Board (PDB) has got its Sylhet circle comprising with five divisions in the region with four districts.

Of these, the Distribution Division Sylhet, is comprised of eight electric supply areas in different thanas of Sylhet district and five electric supply areas of Sunamganj district. The Distribution Division, Moulvibazar is comprised of four electric supply areas in the district and three electric supply areas in Habiganj district. The Sales and Distribution Division-I, Sylhet covers, Ambarkhana, Subidbazar, Zindabazar and the area upto Shahajal Upashahar, of Sylhet town. The Sales and Distribution Division Sylhet-II covers the area from Shahajal Upashahar, Shibganj and the upto, the Jalalabad Cantonment, while the Sales and Distribution Division Sylhet-III covers the south Surma area of Sylhet Sadar.

According to the official sources, during the month of April '95 two crore 67 lakh 66 thousand units of electricity were brought to the Sylhet circle from the National Grid. Of this, two crore 16 lakh 55 thousand units were sold to the subscribers. The system loss during the month stood at 19.09 per cent, the source added. The authorities failed to bring down the percentage in may supply areas. A number of officials of these electric supply areas had been warned by the higher authorities for their failure it is reported.

During the month of April, an amount of Taka 5 crore 45 lakh 73 thousand were realised from the electricity consumers as electricity bills.

Of the total amount of outstanding, Tk 4 crore 68 lakh and 79 thousand had been lying unrealised in the Distribution Division-I, Sylhet where there are 20709 subscribers. The system loss here was 27.29 per cent during the month of April, this year. The amount of arrear bill stands at Taka 3 crore 30 lakh and 27 thousand in the Sales and Distribution Division Sylhet-II where the number of subscribers is

13931. The system loss there was 22.71 per cent. The Sales and Distribution Division-III Sylhet has an arrear electricity bill worth Taka 3 crore 55 lakh 16 thousand. There are 11229 subscribers in this division. The system loss was at 27.95 per cent in April, this year.

The system loss in the Sylhet circle is yet to be brought down as per directives of the higher authorities of PDB. Though some of the officials of the department are claiming that, it had been brought down, but the targets fixed by the authorities in this regard are yet to be achieved.

The Superintendent Engineer, Sylhet Circle had issued official warning letters to a number of Resident Engineers of the circle for their failure in reducing the system loss. Meanwhile, the authorities launched mobile courts and special teams for disconnecting the illegal users of electricity and for realising outstanding bills. As many as 1389 connections were disconnected in the Month of April while 1353 were disconnected in May.

25,000 acres of forest land exhausted each year

NATORE, June 7: High rate of depletion of planted saplings endangered the social afforestation programme in the country, reports UNB.

Official sources said a master plan of social afforestation programme was taken up by the Ministry of Forest and Environment to raise forest lands to 20 per cent by the year 2015 at a cost of Tk 157 crore. Accordingly, the programme started in fiscal 1986-87.

In eight years, 11 crore saplings were planted under the programme, but 50 to 60 per cent of the saplings were lost due to various reasons including vandalism and lack of proper care.

According to official sources, five lakh acres of forest lands have been depleted during the 24 years after liberation.

The depletion was caused

due to illegal occupation of forest land, dishonesty of a section of forest officials and burning of huge quantity of firewoods in the brickfields.

A recent survey revealed that about 25,000 acres of forest land are exhausted each year in the country as permits are being issued indiscriminately to timber traders, firewood merchants, furniture makers, and even people allegedly engaged in smuggling.

According to Rajshahi district forest office, about 50 per cent of the saplings planted under each five-year plan have been destroyed every year due to negligence.

Depletion of forest resources is one of the reasons contributing towards desertification in the northern zone. Besides, this is also a factor for increasing salinity in the southern zone and overall rise

in the country's temperature. In the 16 northern districts, some 72.60 lakh saplings were planted by the Agriculture Directorate during the post-liberation period. Of them, about 40 lakhs were missing.

In the Fourth five-year plan, 9,360 kilometres of roadways were to be brought under the tree planting programme, but only 2230 kilometres were actually brought under the programme.

The target was fixed to bring 9,100 villages under social afforestation during the same plan period. But only 7,218 villages could be brought under the programme. Some 50 per cent saplings were, however, lost.

During the Second and Third five-year plans, a total of 4,256 km roads were brought under the plantation.

Helping them to stand on their own

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, June 7: Now I can lead my family life smoothly as poverty has been driven away from the family, said Samasto Begum, 38, a housewife of village Chatura in Saikupa thana of the district.

Samasto Begum who is a mother of three children took Taka three thousand from Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), Saikupa unit on February 28 in 1993 for paddy husking. She repaid the amount in 50 instalments and again received Taka four thousand against small business. Now Samasto Begum earns Taka about 12,000 per month. She also deposits weekly instalment of Taka 88.

Farida Perveen, 33, mother of four children of village Kurniradah in Saikupa thana received a loan of Taka four thousand from the same organisation against a project of small business. With the money she runs a small trade in her locality and earns Taka between 55 and 60 daily. Talking to this correspondent, Perveen said, her husband is physically unfit for running business as he had been suffering from various diseases and that is the reason she (Perveen) runs the business herself. It changed her family life. Now she is self-sufficient to run her family.

Abdul Jalil, 22, a young unemployed boy of village Chatura was passing his days in great hardship for want of money. BRDB sanctioned a sum of Taka four thousand to purchase a rickshaw van to him. After receiving the amount he purchased the same. After repaying weekly regular instalments of Taka 88 he earns Taka between seventy and seventy-five daily. Now he has become a real earning member in the society, Jalil claimed. He expressed that earlier due to poverty he faced hunger for days together. He is now able to afford meals for three meals a day.

Talking to Manisankor Roy, Thana Project Officer (TPO) of BRDB in Saikupa it was learnt that he started working in this thana on April 20 in 1993 with the aim of alleviate poverty, for development of socio-economic condition of rural people and to give support to them. Till May 31, this year he was able to form 12 societies of male members and 68 societies of female members. Each society which is locally known as samity contains 15 to 25 members. A total of 1768 families came under this projects. The TPO informed. He also informed that another 732 families will be brought under the project through 20 more samities by December this year.

Roy also informed that according to the statistics of 1993 the population of Saikupa thana was 2,53,528 including 1,20,853 female. About 60 per cent of the population was living below poverty.

The Thana Project Officer also informed that initially the government has taken 82 thanas in Greater Jessore, Kushtia, Rajshahi and Pabna districts under Rural Poor Cooperative Project (RPPC) and rest of the thanas of the country are likely to be brought under the programme gradually.

BRDB authorities said that they extended their programmes in those areas where no non-government organisation (NGO) or other development organisation were operating.

Last year BRDB distributed Taka 12 lakh 33 thousand among the society members and recovery rate was hundred per cent. The society members also deposited Taka six lakh, he informed.

Roy also said, till May 31 this year in last five months Taka 13 lakh 58 thousand was distributed and 30 lakh more will be distributed by December this year, he hoped.

BKB to give Tk 10cr loan in 10 S-dists this year

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, June 7: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has taken a plan to distribute Taka about 10 crore among the farmers of 10 southern districts this year.

According to a BKB source, they will distribute Taka 78 lakh in Jhenidah district, Taka 34 lakh in Jessore district, Taka 20 lakh in Magura, Tk 13 lakh in Narail district, Taka 44 lakh in Khulna district, Taka 59 lakh in Bagerhat district, Taka 89 lakh in Satkhira district, Taka 41 lakh in Kushtia district, Taka 12 lakh in Chuadanga district and Taka 19 lakh in Meherpur district.

According to another source Roads and Highways Department (R&H) has been constructing 34 connecting roads in four districts of Khulna division including Jhenidah district at a cost of Taka 13 crore.

R&H sources said, out of total 34 connecting roads, 12 are in Jhenidah district, six in Jessore district ten in Kushtia district and six roads are being constructed in Magura district.

Another report says, construction work of 15 primary schools are going on in Jhenidah district at a cost of Taka 70 lakh.

The sources said Facilities Department of Education Department has completed about 25 per cent of the work so far. The rest of the work is expected to be completed by July this year, sources added.

Income generating projects being implemented in CHT

From CHT Correspondent

RANGAMATI, June 7: The income generating project for the indigent people of the district with a amount of Taka 19.68 lakh allocated by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) which has implemented through Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) will expire by the end of June next.

With a view to develop the socio-economic condition of the indigent people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region, the CHTDB had taken a phased-base full length projects on during cattle, and other small scale business with as amount of Taka 3 crore 80 lakh in 1993-94.



Agri-Varsity (Mymensingh): Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Shah Muhammad Faruk presenting crest to a successful participant on the concluding day of a higher training programme of the newly recruited security personnel of Bangladesh Agricultural University. — Star photo

15 awarded different jail terms in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, June 7: Fifteen persons were found guilty and were sentenced to suffer imprisonment for different terms recently.

The prosecution case in brief is that, a group of people armed with deadly weapons attacked the house of Abdur Rashid of village Jitka under Baniachang thana under Habiganj district on December 30 in 1991. The attackers attacked the house as a sequel to previous enmity. They also set the house on fire. They caused injuries to the houseowner and his daughter Jesmine. Jesmine succumbed to her injuries in the hospital on the next day.

The police after holding investigations submitted chargesheet against 15 persons. The court after examining all the records and witnesses sentenced all the accused persons to suffer imprisonment for ten years each and to pay a fine of Taka two thousand each, in default to suffer imprisonment for six months more. The court also sentenced the accused Shahid Mia to suffer imprisonment for six years more while the accused Farid, Ekhas, Fazar Uddin and Moina Miah would also suffer imprisonment for one year each, the court added in the judgement.

BCL bags all 17 seats in students union election

From Our Correspondent

MOULVI BAZAR, June 7: Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of Awami League, bagged all the 17 seats in the student union election of Baniachong Junab Ali Degree College under Habiganj district recently.

Nazrul Islam and Fazal Ullah Khan were elected as vice president and general secretary respectively in the election held on May 25.

JCD, student wing of BNP, Islami Chhatra Shibir and Samajtantrik Chhatra Front contested the election but failed to capture any seat.

After announcement of the election result BCL workers brought out a victory procession at Baniachong thana headquarters.

Life paralyzed in Meherpur as load-shedding continues

From Our Correspondent

MEHERPUR, June 7: Frequent power failure and load-shedding have been paralysing the life of the town dwellers.

Load-shedding starts from morning and continues until mid-night, affecting production in the mills and factories.

The students and business establishments are the worst sufferers due to continuous load-shedding.

Irrigation which also has been hard heat. It is necessary to irrigate the boro and IRRI fields for the growth of the plantation.

But due to the frequent power failure and load-shedding, shallow tube-wells are not functioning as most of them have gone out of order.

The HSC examinees are the worst sufferers. Most of the streets, lanes and by-lanes of the town plunge into darkness resulting in anti-social activities increasing day by day.

When contacted the PDB official said that severe rationing of electricity from the upper level compelled them to go for the frequent shut down. Only 5 megawatt Power have been allocated for Kushtia in place of 12 megawatt of demand and this has been strictly imposed on dwellers from Tuesday, the official added. They have nothing to do in this regard.

Meanwhile, heat wave have been sweeping over Meherpur ranging temperature between 40 to 42 degrees Celsius during last few days.

The pious Muslims of the

town in a congregation Thursday prayed for rain but there was no sign of rain during last one month.

One rickshawpuller Md. Yasin said that their income has come down due to heat wave because most of the people are not coming out of their houses due to hot weather.

Another rickshawpuller Md. Abdul Gofur in his early sixties of thana road told this correspondent that he can not work during day time and he is to be satisfied with the working in the evening.

It has become very much difficult for him to run his family with the meagre income he earn by working at night only.

Bumper production this year

Price of mango falls by 50 pc

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, June 7: Mango, one of the main seasonal and favourite fruits of our country, is available at a very cheap rate this year.

The prices of different varieties of mangoes available in the local markets are cheaper in comparison with those available last year.

The prices of mangoes have fallen this year due to bumper production and comparatively less demand at home and abroad.

Huge quantities of mangoes including the quality ones were produced in greater Kushtia district. But the cost has fallen by 50 per cent during this year for want of pragmatic policy and patronisation.

It is learnt that the production in other main mango producing areas like greater Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Dinajpur and Rangpur districts has also drastically increased this year.

According to reports, total mango production in our country was three lakh tons in 1985 and it came down to 1.80 lakh tons in 1991. But this year more than 3 lakh tons of mango have been produced, according to official sources.

A total of 45,000 hectares of land is now under mango cultivation scheme in the districts. The per hectare mango production was four tons last year and it was 6.60 tons in 1985, say source.

The quality mangoes are produced in the northern zone of country including greater Kushtia district. The quality mangoes are known as Langra, Khirsapati, Himsagar, Bombai, Fazli and Dudsagar.

About 5,000 people are engaged in mango production in greater Kushtia while in greater Rajshahi, Rangpur and Dinajpur more than 50,000 people are engaged in the same profession.

Numerous traders and workers from different parts of the country including Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Narayanganj throng to the districts to buy mangoes.

Bangladeshi mangoes have also high demand abroad for making juice and jelly.

In the seventies, Bangladesh was the fourth biggest mango producing country in the world but its position was 10th last year.

According to experts, Bangladesh can regain the previous position by boosting production applying modern

technology which will fetch a lot of foreign exchange besides meeting the local demand at considerable prices.

It is learnt that many countries like India, Pakistan, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Indonesia also produce mangoes and they have gained a great success in its production by utilising modern technology and earning a lot of foreign exchange by exporting mangoes.

India annually produces 90 lakh tons of mangoes while the rest of the countries produce 1,42,00,000 tons.

One killed: Goods worth Tk one lakh looted

SATKHIRA, June 7: A man was killed and two others were injured when dacoits opened fire on them on Friday night at Jethua village in Tala thana of the district, reports UNB.

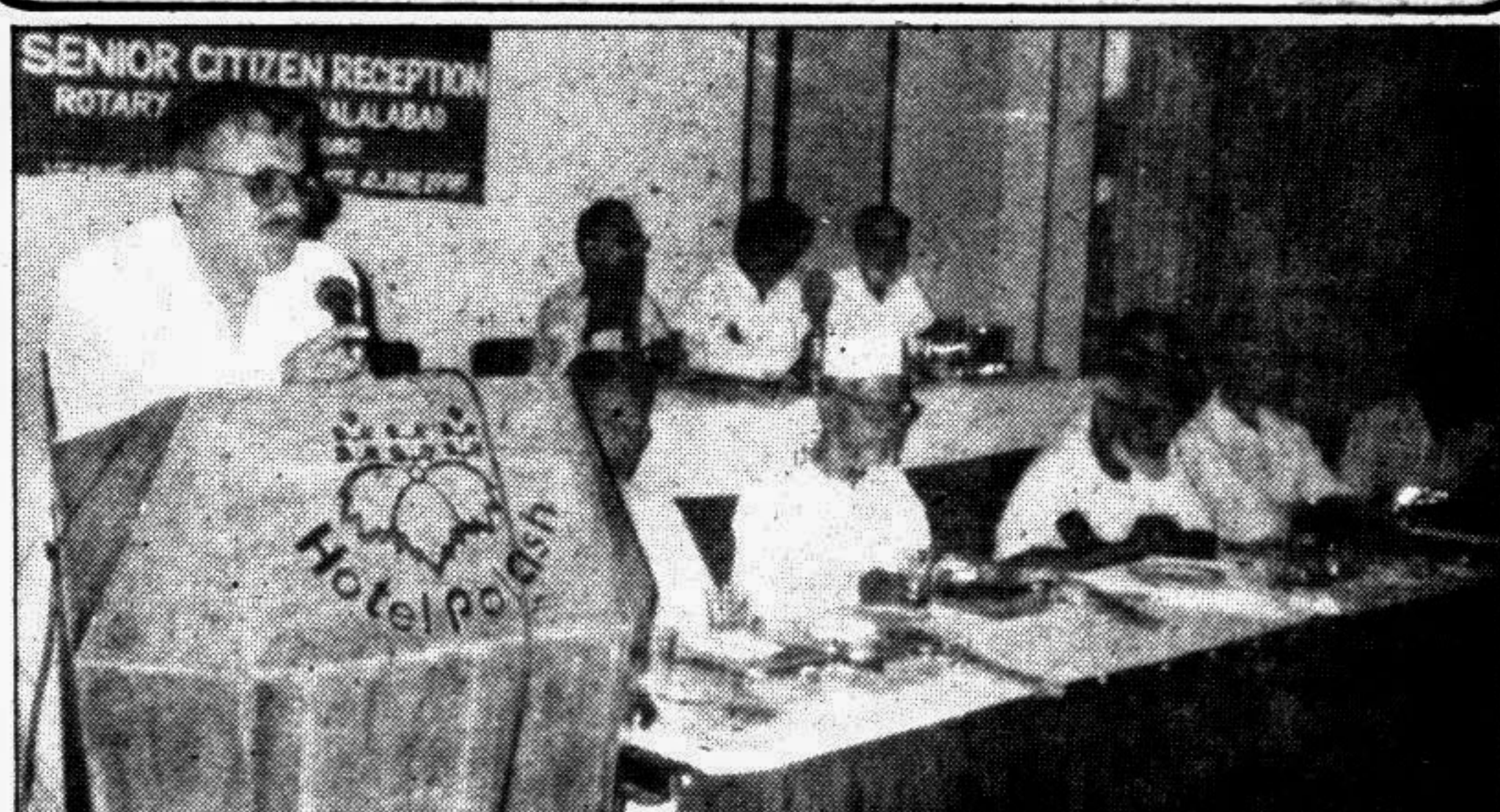
The dead was identified as Arshad Ali, 36. The injured were admitted into Tala Health Complex.

Arshad was attacked by the armed miscreants when he tried to resist them from committing dacoity. They killed him and injured another two people and decamped with goods worth Tk one lakh.

Another report adds, Special police squad recovered a DBBL gun, one pistol and two live bullets from a house of Gadkhali village in Kalaroa thana on Friday night.

Acting on secret information, the squad raided the house of Abul Kalam and recovered the arms. Abul Kalam, however, managed to escape.

A case was filed with the local police.



SYLHET: Col Fahim Ahmed Chowdhury, Director, Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital, speaking as the chief guest at a reception accorded to some senior citizens arranged by the Rotary Club of Jalalabad recently. — Star photo