

2000 helpless tribal people find economical solvency working in PPKD

From A K M Zahoorul Huq

KAPTAL (Rangamati), Sept 13: Despite a lot of natural odds, health hazards and hostility of the vested circles, the Pulpwood Plantation Division, Kaptal (PPDK) has set up an example in afforesting the inaccessible and remote areas successfully, extracting pulpwood exceeding the target and ensuring the economical security to about 2000 hapless tribal people of nomadic nature settled in and around the plantation zone in 1994-95.

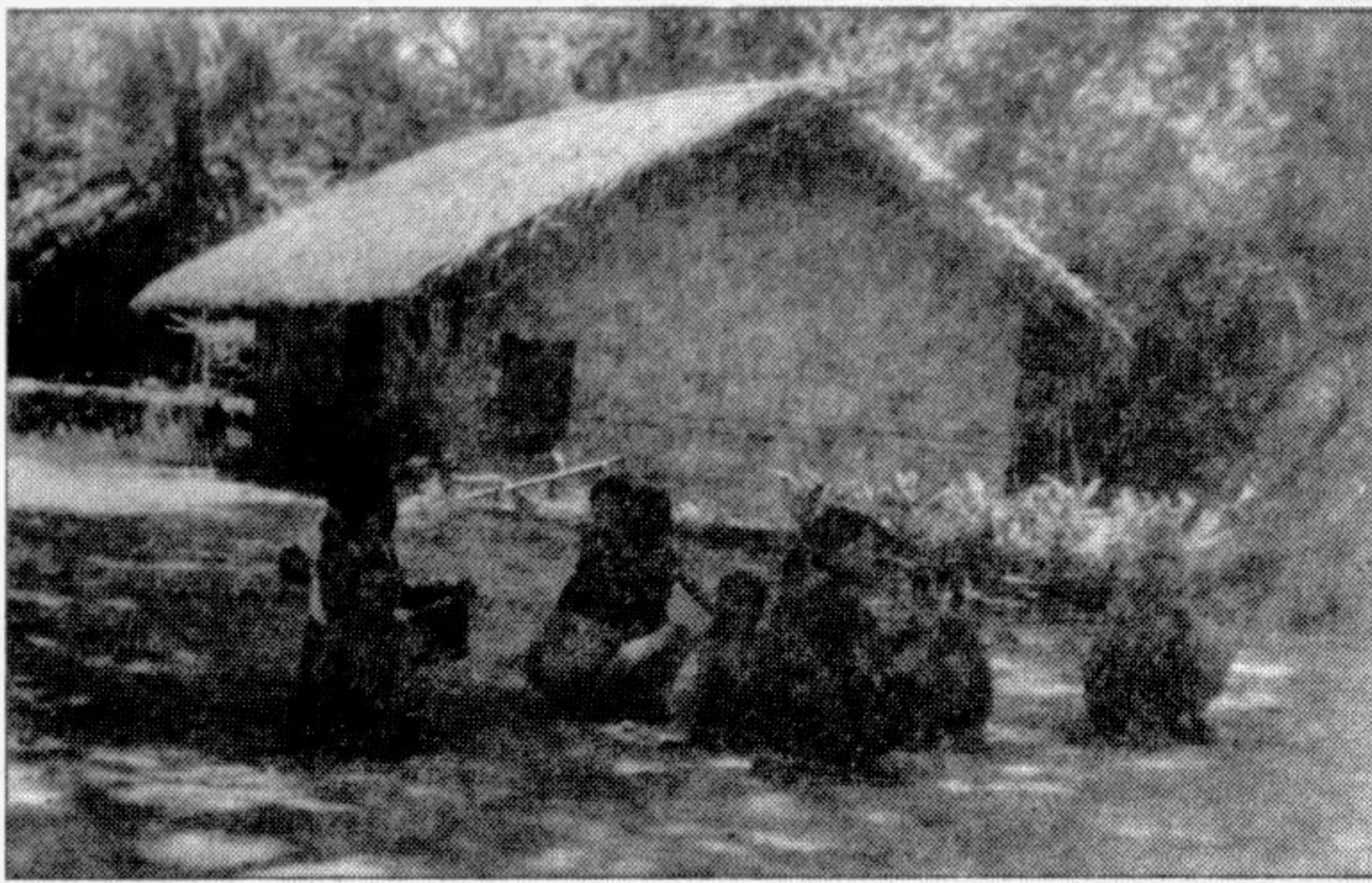
PPDK has raised the plantation on an area of 3,370.0 acres of hillock with about 41 lakhs of seedlings of different species of soft wood like gamar, kadam, eucalyptus, malakana, akashmoni etc along with stumps of teak at inaccessible and remote hills of Arachhari, Dhankchhari, Jimram, Razvillia and Kuyachhari in 1994-95, officials said.

Exceeding the target, PPKD has supplied 19 lakh cubic feet of pulpwood to Karnaphuli Paper Mills Limited in 1994-95. The proposed supply target was fixed at 15 lakh cft of pulpwood during the last fiscal, officials said.

It earned a revenue of Taka 2.51 crore in 1994-95 against sale of pulpwood mainly to Karnaphuli Paper Mills Limited (KPM) for manufacturing paper. With a view to supply pulpwood — the only major raw material for manufacturing paper, the PPKD, created in 1977-78, has so far supplied pulpwood to a tune of 41,05,000 cft till June 30, 1995 on recovery of an amount of Taka 5.12 crore as revenue from KPM on government subsidised scheduled rate.

KPM, one of largest paper manufacturing plants in Asia and the largest one in the country, manned by about 6,000 personnel, almost solely depend on PPKD for supply of raw materials, sources said, adding that PPKD started supply of pulpwood to KPM from 1992-93 fiscal.

The PPKD has so far raised a plantation on an area of 55,195 acres gradually from 1977-78 to 1994-95 with the full time employment of about 2,000 tribal male and female labourers, who were once leading sub-human life due to poverty and absence of employment because of the prevailing insurgency problem in Chittagong



Family members relax in front of a thatched house built for the forest workers. Hundreds of such houses offer accommodation for the tribal families provided by the PPKD authority. —Star photo



A weed removing team consisting of tribal labourers relaxing in a forest. —Star photo



Divisional Forest Officer (standing far behind) is inspecting a weed removing work in Kuyachhari newly planted pulpwood reserve forest. —Star photo

Hill Tracts. In addition to 60 thousand acres of unclassified state forest land — 35 thousand acres in Rangamati and 25 thousand acres in Bandarban hill district — already notified by the government for reservation towards raising plantation, proposals have also been initiated by the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of PPKD for further notification of about 30 thousand areas of more land to raise more pulpwood plantation for involving the local tribal people to ensure their all round economical upliftment and full swing supply of pulpwood to KPM, said Alauddin Biswas, the DFO of PPKD.

"The tribal inmates of the inaccessible hamlets of Kuyachhari, Dhanuchhari, Arachhari, Jimram, Razvillia and Gaidha mauzas who were once unaided and half-fed, now-a-days have been living happily engaging themselves throughout the year with forest activities of PPKD as their economical security has been ensured," said Chaila Prue Karbari of Chotta Kuyachhari.

Shazu Kheang, a student of class VII in Razasthali High School told this correspondent on August 30 during his visit at Kuyachhari new plantation area that he has been maintaining his educational expenses and giving an incentive to his family working for PPKD on all the holidays of his school. He was found confident and happy with a daily wage of Taka 50. He along with 50 others — majority of whom are female labourers — were engaged in removing weeds at Kuyachhari plantation of 1994-95.

"Prior to start of plantation at PPKD it was a dream for us to send our children to school. Now we can afford it working with Forest Department," said Thai Chai U, a member of Gilachhari union parishad.

PPKD, one of the division out of the six in Rangamati Forest Circle is divided into 10 units for proper raising of plantation and conservation of forest planted as PPKD headquarters range, Dhanuchhari range, Raikhali range, Razvillia range, Razasthali range, Nara range, Noapotan range, Bagmara range, Liragoan range and Survey range with one range officer to head each range. It has about 100 officials and staff facing acute shortage of manpower to manage the division properly, officials said.

5 get 10 yrs RI in Habiganj

HABIGANJ, Sept 13: Five people of Nabiganj thana of the district were awarded 10 years rigorous imprisonment for possessing illegal arms, court sources said today, reports UNB.

According to the prosecution, on 17 July 1993 police arrested them when they were taking preparation to commit dacoity in Maka haor area. Police also recovered two big ramaos and a knife from their possession.

Later, police submitted charge sheet against the accused people under Section 19 (Cha) of Arms Act.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge after examining the witnesses and records delivered the judgement on September.

Massive plan to protect livestock in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Sept 13: The livestock department has been executing a massive programme to improve and protect the cattle wealth all over the district.

Under the programme, a cattle-wealth welfare centre will be established in each of the 83 unions in the district to be run under private managements at the supervision of the union parishad chairmen and members and the various voluntary organisations.

The livestock department in this respect has launched a massive motivation drive and so far succeeded to establish more than 40 welfare centres in 40 unions and the rest 43 unions are expected to be covered within the next few months.

There will be 24 trained field workers and many more youths in each centre to treat the ailing cattle and poultry and conduct artificial insemination under the guidance of the livestock department.

The anti-disease vaccination drive and various government measures towards the development of the cattle-wealth and poultry will also be implemented at root levels with the help of these newly established welfare centres, it was gathered.

The unemployed youths and the other volunteers to be associated with these welfare centres will find an opportunity to earn certain amount in lieu of services they will render in the centre which would go a long way to lead their livelihood.

Meeting on college establishment held in Chandpur

CHANDPUR, Sept 13: To establish a new college a meeting of the cross section of the people was held at Munshirhat High School ground recently. Additional Secretary, Md Fazlul Haq presided over the meeting.

Md Yunus Mia, Director General of Secondary and Higher Secondary Directorate, attended the meeting as chief guest. Prof M A Mazid, Chairman of Camilla Board attended the meeting as special guest.

The meeting was addressed among others by Colonel (Rtd), Md Bashiruddin, A B Siddiq, Dr. Noor-alam, Principal Abdul Khaleque, Principal Humayan Azad, Principal Salamat Ullah, Prof Riasatullah Advocate Siddiquar Rahman Hazra, Alam Khan MP, Harunor Rashid Khan and Prof MA Halim Sarker addressed the meeting.

The college named "Munshirhat College" will function from the current academic session.

Load shedding continues in Faridpur

FARIDPUR, Sept 13: The people of the district have been suffering from regular load-shedding for more than a month. Load-shedding takes place three or four times a day in some areas and continues for an hour every time, causing great inconvenience to students, mills and factories, business establishments and specially to the patients in hospitals and private clinics.

Patients needing to be x-rayed and operated upon are worst victims of this load-shedding.

According to an official source, 19 megawatt of electricity is required every day for the town but only 9 megawatt of electricity is supplied daily. The shortage of electricity supply stands at 10 megawatt every day.

The source also said that unless this shortage is restored load-shedding will continue

Frequent highway robbery on northern routes

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Sept 13: The passengers of night coaches on northern districts routes have been facing insecurity of life and properties during travel from and to capital due to increasing highway dacoities.

The practice has now become a common matter on northern highway. The miscreants continue to loot passenger coaches and goods loaded on trucks erecting barricade on highway despite police patrolling, it was alleged.

Occasionally armed miscreants launch attacks on buses and coaches as well as loaded trucks. Recently they snatched away cash, goods and valuables at gun point. Sometime the miscreants occupy the steering wheel and divert victim coaches and trucks to some suitable lonely place other than highway and loot away all valuables from the passengers and truck drivers. Very often highway miscreants in disguise of passengers board the night coaches concealing their arms. When the vehicles reach some suitable place the miscreants first attack the driver and threat passengers with dire consequence and compel them to hand over cash and other valuables. At times passengers are inflicted grave injuries to as and when any desperate passenger tries to resist the robbers.

According to coach drivers and passengers, patrol police hardly encounter during the raid of highway gang. Police simply arrest the miscreants as an when local people hand them over after apprehending the gang.

According to information, during the last two weeks several night coaches and truck dacoities took place along the national highway from Nagarbari to Dinajpur. During the period two dacoity incidents were foiled by local people.

On August 19 a highway gang of miscreants looted away cash detaining three trucks on Sayedpur-Taraganj road after creating barricade the highway with a tree

On August 23 a gang of highway dacoits stopped a passenger coach bound for Panchgarh at Fatki Bridge near Bogra barricaded with a long tree across the road at 3 am and looted away cash and valuables at the sharp weapons point.

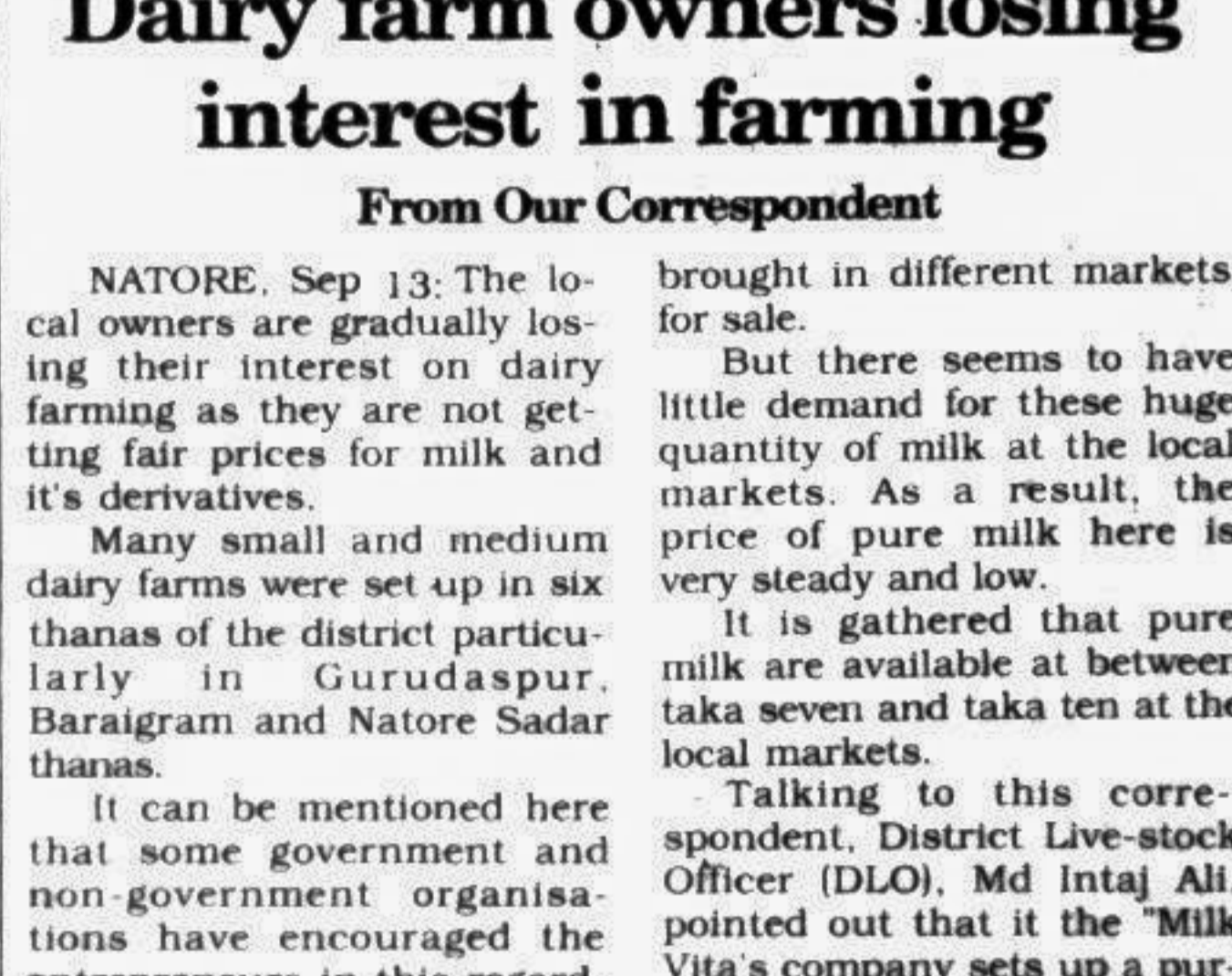
On August 24 a gang of eight miscreants in disguise of passengers boarded a Rangpur bound night coach. The miscreants took possession of the steering as soon as it reached near Ullahpara and diverted the coach to a lonely place near Bogra district where they snatched away cash and valuables from the passengers and left the area. On the next morning local people of village Simabari of Chandaikona found three new faces moving around the village roads. Local people on challenge caught them, they later confessed that they carried out a robbery. The people handed over the miscreants to the police.

On August 28 early in the morning a gang of miscreants raided a Thakurgaon bound night coach at Champatola under Sayedpur thana placing a tree on highway. The miscreants exploded cocktails and looted away cash and goods.

On August 26 a baby taxi was raided by miscreants on Shibganj-Piror road at night in which the miscreants took away cash and other materials from the passengers.

On September 1 at night a mini bus was attacked by highway dacoits near Dhutipukur on Palashbari-Gaibandha road. The miscreants cut down a road side tree and placed it across the road. The miscreants boarded the bus and beat up the passengers looting all their belongings and fled. On the same night another gang raided a truck near Tekani but local fishermen foiled the attempt of dacoity on a truck.

The passengers of night coach, mainly businessmen, can not move freely for fear of highway dacoity and are facing insecurity of life and properties.



SYLHET: Shafiqur Rahman, Secretary, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Ministry of Planning speaking as chief guest at a meeting on Formulation of new perspective plan for Bangladesh (1995-2010) held at a local hotel on Saturday. Sylhet Pourashava Chairman Badaruddin Kamran presided over it while Joint Chief of Planning Commission, Hossain Ahmed Chowdhury, DC, Sylhet Abu Taher Khan and others also spoke. —Star photo

Farmer killed in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 13: A farmer of Bagda village in Ullapara thana of the district was killed by the rival group on Monday following an altercation over cow grazing in the brinjal field, reports UNB.

According to family sources, the victim Makbul Hossain, 35, was grazing a cow in a brinjal field in the morning. The owner of the field picked up a quarrel with him and at one stage hit him with a sharp weapon, shabal, killing him on the spot.

A case was filed with the police.

RU VC seeks cooperation from all to regain congenial atmosphere on campus

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Sept 13: Professor Muhammad Yusuf Ali, Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University seeks cooperation from all sections of people to regain congenial atmosphere in the university. He said that he was trying hard from the beginning of his taking charge of Vice-Chancellor's office to establish peace and friendly atmosphere on the campus and several times met with the important persons.

Politicians, student leaders of all organisations to know their views and advice but some people always tried to push me into a corner by floating various motivated rumours against me and my administration, he said.

Professor Yusuf said that each and every terrorist, irrespective of any affiliation, should be identified and punished as per law of the land to save lives and future

of thousands of students. The Vice-Chancellor said this while he was addressing a group of important personalities of the city yesterday (Tuesday) afternoon at the RU Senate Bhaban. Among others, Pro Vice-Chancellor,

Professor Muhammad Altaf Hussain, President of Rajshahi Bar Association Mujibur Rahman, former general secretary of RUCSU Bazul Karim, former president of

Rajshahi Bar Association Abul Qasem, headmaster of Rajshahi Collegiate School, eminent lawyers Zillur Rahman, Ad Mohsin Khan, eminent gynaecologist Prof Zubaida Khatun, Commissioner of Ward No-28 Ansar Ali, eminent businessman Ziaul Haq and others. The speakers stressed on positive and dynamic role of the teachers to make the campus terrorism-free.

In Rangpur district Allegation of malpractice in conducting OMS

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Sept 13: The much publicised open market sale (OMS) programme of rice seemed to have met a set-back following malpractices by a section of traders blessed by the officials concerned, according to the allegations received here.

On the other hand, all these centres are allegedly closed after functioning only few hours. In meantime, bulk quantity of the allocated OMS rice sold by the dealers in blackmarkets before the bewildered eyes of the common consumers those stood in queue at the centres for hours together and thus they return back disappointed.

Due to fraud in weighing, the general consumers are also being cheated everyday by the dealers, it was alleged.

All these malpractices and anomalies in the functioning of the OMS centres, at least 36 metric tonnes of rice is allocated everyday for distributions in the district under the programme so far yielded nothing encouraging towards achieving destined goal.

As a result the rice price hike is now persisting all over the district causing much sufferings to the common consumers, it was alleged.

Extension of ban on political activities at IU discussed

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: Proposal for extending the time limit of banning student's political activities in the Islamic University campus came up for discussion in a meeting of the Vice-Chancellor Dr Enamul Huq and the student leaders of the University held on Tuesday last.

The banning of political activities by students in the campus for two and half months will expire in the near future and as such the enhancing the period of ban was raised in the meeting. Since the Vice-Chancellor was given the mandate of imposing further period of ban in the last Syndicate meeting after reviewing the present situation in the campus Vice-Chancellor convened the meeting to discuss the matter with the student leaders.

The persons who were present in the meeting were Dr Ashraf Ali, Dean of the Faculty of social science, Rahamat Ali Siddique Proctor, Prof Ekiuddin Dean of the Religious Affairs, Faiz Mohammad Sirajul Haq, Advisor for students, Anisur Rahman, Provost of Zia Hall, Sarwar Jahan Bulbul and Shahid Ahmed Chowdhury.

Mohammad Ali from Jatotabadi Chattra Dal, Zillur Rahman, Shamsul Islam Joha, Mir Murshed from Chattra League, Nawab Ali Khan, Akmal Hossain, Abu Bakkar Bakul from Chattra Union, Swapan Biswas and Rokunuzzaman from JSD, Shariful Islam Ratan from

Chattra Maitree, Abdul Kader Tutul from Chattra Front, Matiar Rahman from Islamic Chattra Majlis and Abdus Samad from Jamiat Talabaye.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Enamul Haq proposed for extending the period of ban for further 3 months and advised the students to accept the proposal in the greater interest of improving the academic atmosphere in the campus.

Student leaders however demanded withdrawal of the ban through proper political rules and regulation. They also demanded justice with regard to terrorist activities that occurred on April 28. Proper steps in the construction of the monument connected with Liberation War, immediate action against those responsible for corruption in administration and solution of Transport Problem of the students and increasing the facilities for games & sports and cultural activities. Vice-Chancellor assured the implementation of all the demands gradually. Political activities in the campus will remain banned upto September 20 and on that day a meeting will be held for preparation of political rules & regulations.

Journalists suffer for lack of fax facilities in 3 districts

From Our Correspondent

JENIDAH, Sept 13: People specially the journalists of Jhenidah, Magura and Narail districts have been suffering badly for want of fax facilities in district headquarters, it is learnt.

According to reports, after repeated assurance from the Telephone and Telegraph (T & T) authorities no fax machine has been installed in any Public Call Office (PCO) of these three districts. As a result the concerned people including the journalists have been suffering badly. The local leaders urged the authorities to set up fax machines at Jhenidah, Magura and Narail district headquarters at no delay.

Dairy farm owners losing interest in farming

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Sept 13: The local owners are gradually losing their interest on dairy farming as they are not getting fair prices for milk and its derivatives.

Many small and medium dairy farms were set up in six thanas of the district particularly in Gurudaspur, Baraigram and Natore Sadar thanas.

It can be mentioned here that some government and non-government organisations have encouraged the entrepreneurs in this regard.

There are two to ten cow of better species at each dairy farms.

According to official source, there are about 60 dairy farms which have got their registrations.

Among the dairy farms here, about 40 farms have at least five to ten cows of its own. These cows are of better species and said to give at least five or six kilograms of milk a day, the source added.

But there seems to have little demand for these huge quantity of milk at the local markets. As a result, the price of pure milk here is very steady and low.

It is gathered that pure milk are available at between taka seven and taka ten at the local markets.

Talking to this correspondent, District Live-stock Officer (DLO), Md Intaj Ali, pointed out that it the "Milk Vita's company sets up a purchasing centres at Natore sadar or Banpara area, the proper value of milk could be ensured.

All further disclosed that the purchased milk would be also easily transported to the Milk Vita centre at Baghabari Ghat through highway communications.

Besides, small traders can purchase considerable amount of milk for supplying it to Dhaka centres or Baghabari Ghat centre, and this can contribute in raising the rate of milk at the local markets, another source expressed.

The government should take appropriate steps immediately to ensure value of milk at the local markets as well as to encourage the entrepreneurs here for setting up dairy farms in Natore.