#### 2 killed, 10 hurt in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Mar 5, 1\vo persons were killed and 10 others injured in a clash be tween two groups of people at village Bhabanipur in Bhairab thana on Feb 23.

The dead were identified as Zaher Mia 25 of village Rasulpur and Rais Mia 55 of vil lage Bhabanipur.

Deceased Zaher Mia belonged to one group while Rais Mia belonged to the rival group and both the groups used lethal weapons during the

According to the report. Hanif of village Rasulpur got married to one Bakula, daughter of Fazlu Mia of village Bhabanipur two years back. Bakula left the husband six months ago following quarrel with her husband and did not return On the day of incident, Hanif alongwith some others went to his father-in-law's house to bring his wife back forcibly. At one stage, hot altercation turned to bloody clashes between the two groups leaving two persons dead and 10 people injured. Of the injured, three were later admitted to the Bhairab hospital.

#### BKB gives Tk 40cr loan in Feni, Noakhali

FENI. 5 : Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB), Agrani Bank and Sonali Bank have disbursed Tk 40.23 crore as loan in various sectors in Noakhali and Feni districts in 1995, reports UNB.

The loans were distributed for crop production, fisheries, poultry and dairy farming, oil, rice and re-rolling mills, cold storage, engineering workshop and expansion of jute mills.

The three banks distributed the loans from their 49 branches in eight thanas of the two districts. These are -Parshuram, Chhagalnaiya, Sonagazi. Daganbhuiyan and sadar thanas of Feni district, and Senbag. Companiganj and sadar thanas of Noakhali dis-

Of the total, Agrani Bank disbursed Tk 27 crore from its 16 branches, Sonali Bank distributed Tk 7.13 crore from its 18 branches and BKB Tk 6.10 crore from its 15 branches. \*

#### Two rice traders convicted for misappropriating rice bags

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Mar 5: Md Shahidullah, Additional Sesstorf and Special Tribunal Judge, Kishoreganj in a judgement delivered recently convicted two rice traders of Pakundia Bazar and sentenced them to suffer rigorous imprisonment for three years and to pay a fine of Taka 1000 each or indefault to suffer RI for another three months on charge of selling rice meant for Open Market Sale (OMS) into blackmarket.

According to the prosecution, on March 8, 1995, a police team of Pakundia thana raided the shops of Paritosh Bhoumik and Milon of Pakundia Bazar. Police recovered 50 kg from the shop of Paritosh Bhoumik and 10 kg from the shop of Milon while the rice was being sold into blackmarket. The rice was earlier alloted for sale under OMS programme through the dealers.

#### Posts of field level agriculture deptt officers lying vacant

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Mar 5: Official and field level works are being hampered badly as a good number of posts have been lying vacant in Agriculture Department in Kishore-

gani district for long. The post of Thana Agriculture Officer has long been lying vacant in Mitamoin thana of the district. The posts of Subject Matter Officer (SMO) in Itua. Mitamoin and Nikli and the posts of junior Agriculture Extension Officer in Tarail. Hossainpur, Pakundia and Itna thanas have also been lying vacant. Nikli thana agriculture office is running without upper division assistant cum cashier.

#### LGED implemented 460 projects in

last 5 yrs in Feni FENI, Mar 5: Local Government Engineering Directorate. during the last five fiscal years, successfully implemented a total 460 schemes in the district at a cost Tk 33.38

crore, reports UNB. The schemes included carpeting of 94 kilometre road of different areas, brick pavement of 159 kilometre road, construction of 689 metre bridges and culverts, repair of 78 kilometre road and 77 bridges and culverts, construction of one regulator, development of two hats, reconstruction of two cyclone shelters and construction of two bailey bridges.

With the completion of these schemes, the communication system between rural. thana and district level was improved to a great extent.

## Fanous date cake of Jessore faces extinction

From Atiur Rahman

JESSORE: Mar 5: Centuries old tradition Khejurer-gur (molasses made from date juice) of Jessore occupies prestigious position as favourite food item across the

country. According to sources, its quality, colour, taste and standard has largely been improved to cope with changing demand of consumers over the

History says that gur (molasses) has survived series of setbacks to retain the tradition with full-glory and reputation, despite conspiracies hatched by vested interests to destroy this cottage industry, from time to time.

In early eighteenth century, number of European companies backed by British gov-ernment in India established plants to produce gur-oriented powdered sugar locally known as Gur-Chini at various places in the district with deliberate intentions to stop gur production and thereby economically cripple those who were associated with gur producing industry. Plants were localised on riverside at Chowgacha, Jhinkergacha, Monirampur. Keshabpur, Kotchandpur, Kaligani, Saliakupa, Taherpur and Magura. Sources said, riverside bazars were preferred to facilitate easy handling of gur transportation at lesser cost and labour.

Reports say that at initial stage. European companies flooded the markets with the powdered sugar at cheaper price than local gur in parallel to it to capture market.

Report say that supply of sugar production was huge in the markets and local gur producers' existence became very tight.

After a short while things began to change fallowing the disinformation that spread about processing of powered sugar. Consumers at their own, got united and boycotted the new production in a bid to save their local production. Thus, the market of sugar production flopped and the result was that most plants were about to shutdown after suffering heavy financial losses. Until recently. 'gur-chini'

was available in certain selected grocers shop. It contin-ued to be produced by some local men for use as medicine in stomach -trouble.

These days, it is fully out of market as, the demand has been lost with loss of confi-



wholesalers.

There are still some fami-

lies well known for gur trade

in the area. Mridha family in

Chowgacha in the district de-

serves to be mentioned in this

Women removing a gur tray from an oven. - Star photo

According to another source, before partisan of Bengal in 1947, several markets including Chatiantala. Khalshi Khalishpur and Kaligoni were famous for gurmarket in the country. During gur seasons, hundreds of wholesalers from Calcutta used to crowd these markets and purchased gur in massive quantity without any checking and market verification from local retailers who acted as their agents.

Retailers purchased it direct from producers against cash, advanced to them by wholesalers to act on their behalf on percentage basis. Normally rate of market used to be determined by local retailers who played two fold games: To earn money from producers by paying less than actual price and by keeping wide margin in selling rate to

lised the shipment of gur from Chowgacha to Calcutta. His brother Rajab Ali was the main man to guide operation

of the shipment. Mridha family has changed their business and now is wellknown as big merchants in the area. Gur production and the business have died down in post-partisan days, followed by the Liberation War.

Many markets were abolished under changed circumstances with drastic fall in demand. During erstwhile East Pakistan, Mirkadim, Sylhet, Bhoirab bazars emerged as great gur-markets. In course of time, the market fell.

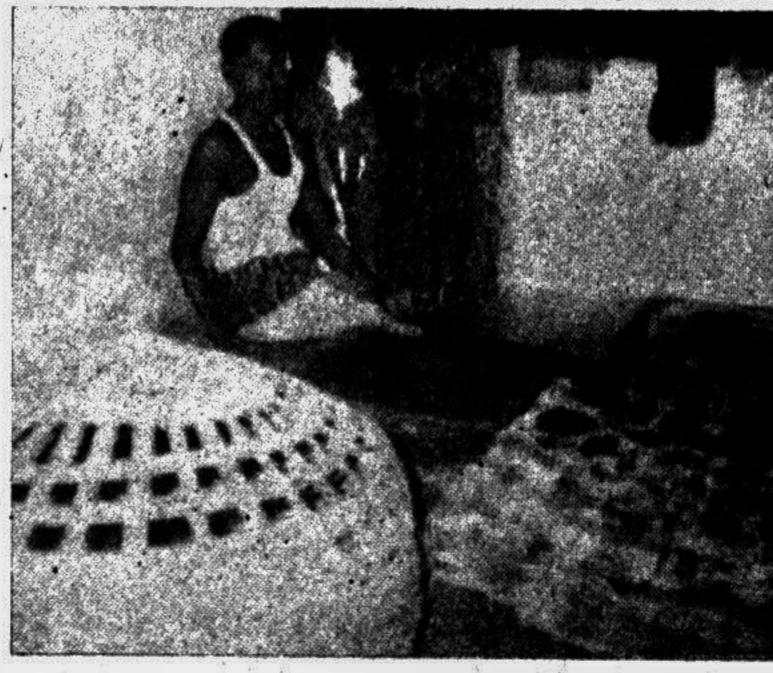
When contacted, the gur producers, who are called in local term as 'gachi,' told this correspondent that sluggish market and low-demand led ordinary 'gachis' to leave the profession in the struggle for

existence. It is observed that two years ago 95 per cent of the gachi community fared no better than day labourers; eco-

nomically they were hand to mouth and their income was quite negligible hardly enough to meet their both ends. Most

that lastly made the gur-supplier to stop the business. Gacht community has vapished, who lost in competition with the group of modern producers in quality, taste and colour.

Bittika comprising Tejrob. Kudalia near Khajura bazar in



A man processing gur.

of them were landless. Either they were employed on daily wage basis by landholders or they worked on contract basis at certain percentage of the monthly income from the production. They were, naturally, illiterate, and ignorant of any merit of gur. Besides the preparation process of gur by this group of gachi was in one sense below standard and not at all useable for human consumption because of preparation in unhygienic condition. It is reported that there was a particular group among this gur producing community (gachi) who had bad names in preparing gur mixed with mud and various other foreign elements to earn more profit by

cheating innocent consumers. . On many occasions, this sort of complaints used to pour-in different markets from Sylhet Mirkadim and Bhairab

- Star photo

admired for production of best date-cake gur in the district. There is no area in the district to challenge Bittika-production, nor to be compared at

Jessore sadar, is presently

Mohiuddin Hashka, 75, of Tejrob is regarded as expert in date-cake. His production sells at highest rate and is very limited in supply. It is not openly

During recent visit to Bittilea, the best considered date-cakemaker. Mahiuddin Lashkar was interviewed by this correspondent. When asked what were the

reasons behind for his success in the date-cake making job. he said that his production is different from any of his contemporaries in all respect. Describing his speciality in

preparation of date-cake. he said that both sides of the cake

he makes looked dry, hard and transparent while the inner side or core remained full of liquid gur (juice) substance, containing fresh flavour and taste of the date juice. At one stage he remarked that the cake he makes was apparently a hard nut but melted like milky cream when eracked.

He was courageous to say that had he been a bit literate and trained, he would have set up a workshop for producing date-cake on cottage industry basis. It had brighter prospect both home and abroad if properly, explored. He expressed his unhappiness over the gov-ernment's attitude to promote its market feasibility.

Detailing his experience earned through trial and errors method in his long 60 years of practice he said, merit of production depends on various factors including cutting surface of date tree heads, extract juice from there, boiling

and turning into cake.

He said sharpness of the knife used for cutting of surface was the main technique to extract quality Juice. The next stage was boiling which was controlled by fuels and last but not least was final stage to intensily the boiled date-juice into gur and from there to turn into cake.

For preparing good datecake, fuel that was quite conducive was the date branches. and tetul.

He said that he goes on collecting fuel throughout the year and preserve for use during season. He however, said that fuel crisis was deepening at an alarming rate with felling of trees and days are not far of when this cottage industry will

According to him, season of gur production begins early in November and ends in mid-

When asked about his income from gur business during the season, he said, his daily production varied between 10 to 12 kilograms (kg). His earning was nearly Taka 48.000 during the period. Prices of cake he makes is Taka 40 per

#### Gas found while sinking tubewell pipe

KISHOREGANJ. 5 Gas out from a villager's courtyard at Kalikabari village near district town while sinking a tubewell on Tuesday, reports;

According to the Deputy Commissioner, the gas started coming out with mud while installing a tubewell at the courtyard of Moulana Ahmadij

The gas started emitting after the sinking of a pipe about 70 feet deep. DC Monews agency that they com-municated with the Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry to take necessary initiative to examine the nature of

Witnesses said gas is con ing out from five feet width hole created by the pressure of the same.

## 2 housewives commit

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Mar 8: 11 housewives and a young ar committed suicide in separate incidents in Kanadi thana recently.

One Rumela Khaten, 35 wife of Abdul Baten of whage Betal committed auticide by setting on fire herself after pouring kerosene on her body on Feb 19. The cause behind the suicide could not be ascertained.

In another incident, Halima! Khatun, 23, mother of a child; hanged herself in her father's house at Chatal Baghata village on Feb 22. Her husband married second times a few days ago, it is learnt. A 16-year old girl, named

Asia Khatun, daughter of Mofizuddin of village Ramdi swallowed poison for unknown reason. All the members of the deceased's family went into hide following the incident. Three separate cases were

registered with Katiadi police station in this connection.

# Century-old park wears an ugly look

PABNA Mar 5: The only park within Pabna town, popufarly known as Jubilee Tank. covering a vast area in the heart of this tiny but one of the oldest pourashavas of the country, has ceased to be a park. Unfortunately the park turned into a grazing and bathing ghat for the cattles and a safe place for the miscreants and drug-addicts.

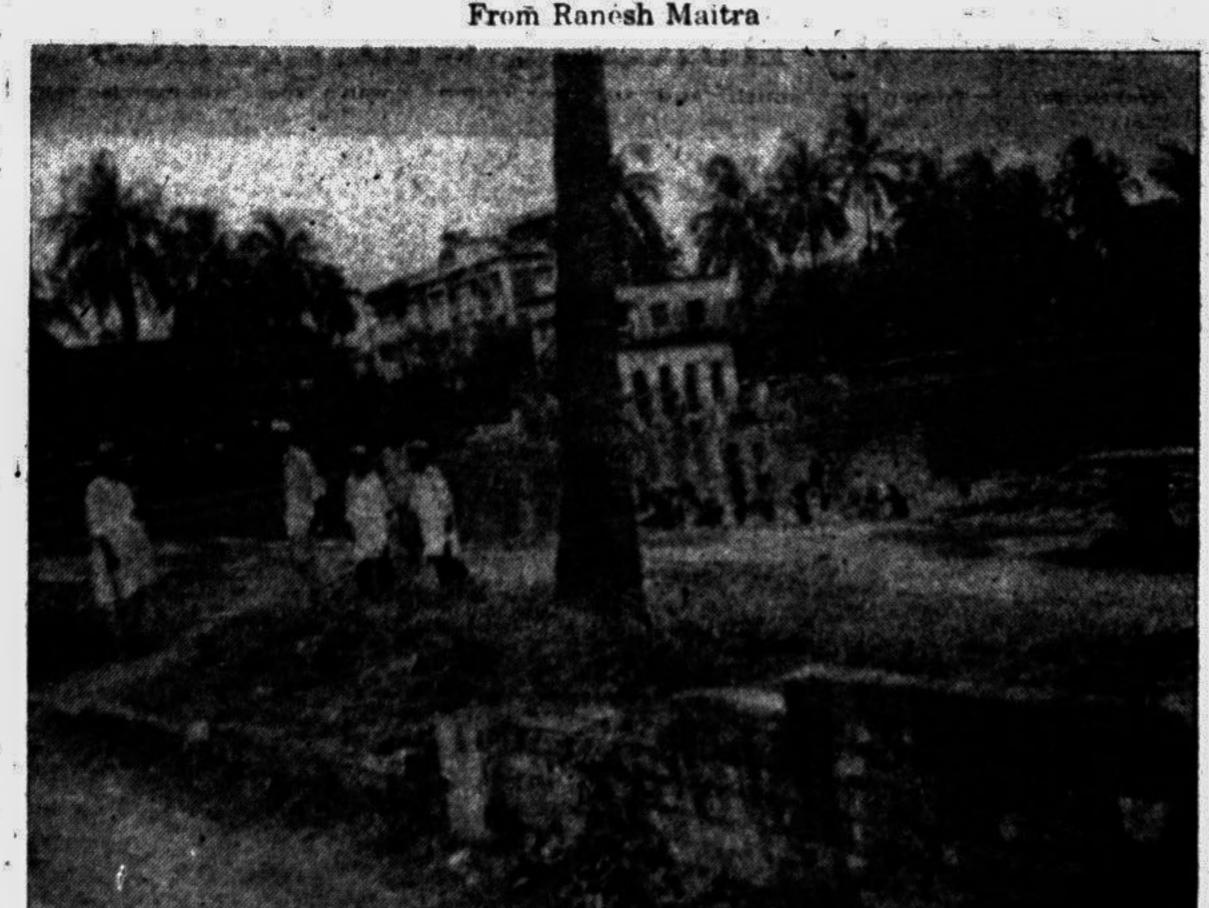
The Jubilee Tank, having a vast area with a pond in the middle, has in the meantime, lost all its charm, beauty and

Men, women and children, along with cattles, are seen bathing, washing cloth and other utensils without resistance from the pourashava authorities.

The water of this tank, having enough dept, has been getting polluted everyday due to utter negligence and for want of care taken by the pourashava authorities. Unfortunately, it is observed

that the brick-made surrounding walls of Jubilee Tank have been damaged and the barbedwire fencing that was erected after damage done to the brick-walls, were also similarly damaged and there-after no surrounding wall has been built. Thus, cattles are found grazing around the Jubilee Tank and during the night, the place is virtually captured by the miscreants making it quite impossible for the town inhabitants to have fresh air for which the place was meant for

over a century ago. There were, 12 cemented nice benches on all the four sides of the tank where elderly



People bathing in the forbidden Jubilee Tank while the collapsed boundary wall of the park remains unrepaired. - Star photo

like small building (roundshaped) with benches built with cement for enabling people to sit there for avoiding scorching sun-rays or rainfalls.

would sit. take rest, gossip after having walk around and on the first-floor, the pourashava kept a big size radio from which people in ear-lier days listened national and international news, enjoy songs, music and other interesting programmes aired by the radio. No such radio-set is there and the room is now a broken and damaged one lying uncared for years together.

In fact, the Jamous Jubilee Tank of Pabna was not a tank or pond in the ordinary or commonly used sense of the term. Jubilee Tank was a beautiful park and the only park of the town where hundreds of people - mostly from the literate sections came everyday, remained there for hours and a highly cultured atmosphere prevailed there. College teachers, school teachers, boys and

and taking fresh air) used the park and enjoyed the place for physical and mental rejuvena-None in those days used the water of this sufficiently deep tank which never dries up and sufficient water is found always

girls having a cultural outlook besides diabetic and other pa-tierits (who needed walking

stored therein. Not only this, on all sides of Jubilee Tank, many plants flower were found planted and

proper care was taken for enabling people to enjoy the fragrance from blooming flowers. In fact, a heavenly atmosphere prevailed there and it was en-

Jubilee Tank is also known as "Luxmisagar" and from the ancient time it is found that Abhoy Gobinda Choudhury Zemindar of Tantibanda under Sujanagar thana of Pabna distriet donated land for the construction of an ideal tank to commemorate the silver jubilee of Queen Victoria and herice it was named as Jubilee Tank. Another Zamindar of Pabna Luxminath Pramanik donated necessary fund for its construction and hence, in Bengali, it is also named as "Luxmisagar". Jubilee Tank was constructed in 1887.

Later, Pabna pourashabha took over both the ownership and management of this beautiful park and brought it under its presentation laws.

Now all the glory i although lost, the people of all shades of opinion hope that Jubilee Tank would be properly maintained and necessary reconstruction and repair work would also be undertaken on a priority basis as there is no other park in this old municipal town and its necessity is simply growing with passage

#### Bee farming becoming a hobby now From Ashit Chowdhury

SIRAJGANJ. Mar 5: farming has turned to a profitable profession in Straigani district. The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) has been extending training facilities to the interested persons.

It is learnt that bee farming is gaining popularity among the villagers. During mustard and mango seasons, bee farming gets momentum. The bees collect honey from mustard and mango blossoms. Best quality of refined honey is sold at Tk 100 per kilogram in the village markets.

The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation has been extending training

taken up in Sirajganj sadar. Rajganj. Ullapara and Ka markhanda thana areas. - So far 37 persons in sadary, 73 in Raigani. 30 in Ullapara and 38 in Kamarkhanda thanas

have been trained. During two months' training course, the BSCIC pays Tk 200 per month . to every trainee as stipendi Honey collected from the boxes may be sold by the farmers or through BSCIC! When contacted the Assistants General Manager of Sirajganf BSCIC told The Daily Star that training courses in other thana areas will also be extended. Its was observed while visit

ing few farms in Sirajganj towa that the farmers are mostly:



Interested persons displaying bees raised in their farms in Sirajganj town. - Star photo

facilities to the interested honey collectors as well. The district office sources

of BSCIC told that primarily

training schemes have been

amateurs and have been benefitted by this parttime job which costs nothing but earns a reasonable amount of profit.

### Project taken up in 1965

## Proposed construction of highway awaits implementation

From Iqbal Siddique

SYLHET, Mar 5: About 40 lakh people of Habiganj and Sunamgant districts have been suffering badly due to the poor communication system for decades. Besides, an ambitious project styled as Sunamganj-Dhaka Highway via Habigani has been lying pending for the last 30 years due to red-tapism in the department concerned. None of the authorities took any initiative to implement the project taken up in 1965. Though after liberation, a number of leaders committed for implementation of the same, but no effective step has yet been taken. On implementation of the

project, the proposed road would reduce the distance of

Sunamganj district with the

capital by 80 kilometres. Travellers have to travel about 180

-kilometres through Shaistaganj

(Habiganj) for communicating

The road when completed will be only 102 kilometres, an official source said. It would facilitate the transportation of different commodities . It may be stated here that. major part of these districts are low-lying and lack mini-

with Dhaka from Sunamganja

mum road communication. It hinders the development activities and others in the region. The people have to depend on either foot or on boat during the monsoon, as means of communication. The haor thanas in these two districts which are considered as the backward areas would be benefitted, if the proposed road is constructed. Besides, the Sylhet region which faces frequent natural calamities like floods and storms almost every year will also be able to use the highway as substitute road during the disaster period.

people used to came both in the morning and in the evening and after having necessary walk, would sit on those benches and had gossips. Not only the elderly people but also the girls including the housewives would use those benches for the same purpose. But nowa-days, it has become quite impossible for such men and women to sit and take rest or gossip over the benches due to. the miscreants and also because most of these benches have been destroyed and were lying unrepaired and thor-

drinking.

oughly uncared. On the north-west corner of the tank, there was a tomb-

unique also for enjoying cool air. But unfortunately, this tomb has also been mostly damaged and the benches inside broken. Now, it is a place used by herein and ganza or liquor addicts - although the tomb can easily be repaired and made worthy of using for the purpose it was originally The most pathetic part of

small but beautiful building

constructed long ago on the northern-ghat of Jubilee Tank.

has also been badly damaged by

the miscreams and drug-ad-,

dicts. On the ground floor of

this beautiful building, people

the story is that a two-storey

A buffalo in the famous Jubilee Tank seen bathing and

- Star photo

The centuries-old rest room or the shed inside the park left uncared.

- Star photo