

Three commit suicide, another luckily escapes

From Our Correspondent FARIDPUR, Apr 3: Three persons including male child committed suicide recently by taking poison.

In the first incident, it is reported that Josna Sarker, 30, wife of Nimal Chandra Sarker of Amanda Nagar village under sadar thana forced her two sons — Nishikanta 5 months old and Niranjan 4 to drink poison and later she took poison. The victims Josna and Nishikanta died but Niranjan luckily escaped.

Family quarrel is said to be the cause for her committing suicide, family sources said. In the second case, Jainab Bibi, 30, wife of Sekender Mia of Darjapuri village under Nagarkanda thana committed suicide by taking poison.

It is reported that the victim Jainab Bibi had been suffering much from a chronic stomach pain. On the day of the incident, she took poison reportedly due to unbearable pain in the stomach.

Separate case were lodged. Property worth Tk 50 lakh gutted in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Apr 3: Property worth about Taka 50 lakh was gutted when a fire broke out at Azimganj bazar in Karimganj thana in the first week of this month.

The fire originated from a shop due to electric short circuit and completely gutted 18 shops, one Mosque and fire houses situated just adjacent to the bazar. Two cows and six goats were also burnt alive.

Kishoreganj Fire Brigade was immediately informed about the fire incident over telephone from Karimganj police station, but they could not go to the spot as their vehicles were out of order, it is alleged.

Local people brought the fire under control after two and a half hour struggle. The loss caused by the fire was primarily estimated at about Taka 50 lakh, local UP chairman said.

Robbery in coach

From Our Correspondent FARIDPUR, Apr 3: A robbery was committed in a night coach en route from Dhaka to Benapole in the early hours of last March 6.

It is reported that a gang of dacoits numbering 7 to 10 were travelling in the coach in the guise of passengers. When the coach reached near Khankhanpur, six kilometres from Daulatdia, the dacoits suddenly took control of the vehicle by overpowering the driver. Then they started panic creating activities along with ransacking luggages and personal belongings of the passengers. Five passengers who tried to resist were injured. They looted valuables and cash worth Taka four lakh. They got down from the coach at Dhuddi Hat six kilometres from Faridpur town.



JHENIDAH: (From left to right) Sayed Mujibur Rahman, Assistant Professor, Government KC College, Belayet Hossain, District Education Officer, Alfaz Uddin, Litterateur Ansar Uddin, Vice President Public Library, Manwar Hossain President JSD Jhenidah district unit, Subrata Kumar Mallik Principal Jarip Biswas College, Manwara Khatun President Mahila Parishad and Hosne Ara Khondokar President Mahila Samity Jhenidah delivering speeches at a seminar on "Role of Journalists in Independence War" held at Jhenidah Press Club on March 25 last. — Star photo

Erosion threatens fresh areas in Chandpur Meghna, Dakatia start evil doings again

CHANDPUR, Apr 3: A scheme has been taken up by the Bangladesh Water Development Board in Chandpur to check erosion of rivers Meghna and Dakatia. Taka ten crore has already been sanctioned for implementation of the scheme, official sources said.

According to the scheme, about one thousand feet area will be protected by dumping cement concrete block in the eroded area. These blocks will be placed in the erosion prone areas by placing nets along with them. Accordingly 2 lakh 40 thousand concrete cement blocks will be made during the current season. About 40 thousand such blocks have already been made. These blocks will be placed within June this year.

Chandpur, one of the busiest and largest trade centre for raw materials of the country

has been facing gradual extinction following erosion by the mighty rivers, the Meghna and the Dakatia for last 22 years. The Meghna and Dakatia together eroded about one mile strip of the original town from the western part of the town since 1972 devouring lands, buildings and business firms worth about Tk 500 crore, according to unofficial estimates.

Erosion of Chandpur town which started last year took serious turn threatening the hundred years old railway station and famous steamer ghat. The turbulent Meghna and the Dakatia so far eroded about eight thousand square feet along both, Natunbazar and Puranbazar areas during last erosion season.

Bangladesh Water Development Board is responsible for the protection of Chandpur town here. They have been

making frantic efforts with its meagre resources and logistics support to check erosion of the town. The efforts of Water Development Board can hardly cope with the intensity of erosion. The Water Development Board has so far dumped 36 thousand 6 hundred concrete blocks at different points of river side. The Water Development Board has so far spent Tk 26 crore for the protection of Chandpur town since 1972, the official sources said.

The people of Chandpur urged the government to protect Chandpur town from any further erosion by the rivers Meghna and Dakatia. Last year rivers Meghna and Dakatia cause massive damages to the town for which business was established next to the rivers, especially the fish market in Barobazar was badly hit forcing at least 70 trade houses to

abandon their business and shift elsewhere. More than 13,000 concrete block were dumped at the erosion sites at and emergency basis. More blocks were later dumped but perhaps in the wrong time at the wrong site.

Local people allege that the concerned authority pays no attention to their duties. Had the blocks, been dumped much earlier during dry seasons last year, erosion could have been checked to some extent at least. Business leaders foresee, similar situation will take place this year too. But little has been done so far a precautionary measure to check erosion, local people allege.

Several schemes have been taken up over the years but all of them failed to achieve their goal.

Mugger caught red-handed

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, Apr 3: A mugger was caught redhanded in the town today. Two others, however, managed to escape after mugging Tk two lakh.

At about noon when Shahin Rob Chowdhury, son of the owner of Pushti Foods Ltd. was going to a bank to deposit an amount of Tk. two lakh, a gang of muggers waylaid him and asked him to hand over the money at gunpoint. They snatched the money from him and two of them managed to escape with the money but the local people caught Roashan, 20, along with a pigeon. Later they handed him over to the police after giving him a good beating.

Raoshan is allegedly an activist of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal.

A case has been started with the Kotwali police.

France and the United States, along with the European Commission have been pushing to link trade with respect of minimum labour standards prohibiting the employment of children or prisoners and insisting on trade union rights.

Two commit suicide

From Our Correspondent FARIDPUR, Apr 3: Two persons committed suicide in two thanas of the district recently.

Nasima Akter, 23, wife of Anwar Hossain of village Shaikubi under Sadarpur thana committed suicide by taking poison.

Family feud was reportedly to be the cause of the suicide. A case was lodged. Sabita age 12, daughter of Khondaker Alauddin of village Chator under Boalmari thana committed suicide by taking poison.

It is reported that Sabita used to work as maid-servant in the house of one Matiar Rahman in the same village. She was reportedly suffering from pain in the stomach for a pretty long time. On the day of occurrence she took poison due to unbearable pain, it is learnt.

A case was lodged.

Moulvibazar border areas: Smugglers' paradise

From Rajat Kanti Goswami

MOULVIBAZAR, Apr 3: Some areas of the border of Moulvibazar district has become a paradise for the smugglers. Smuggled goods including sugar have flooded different markets of the district.

Indian goods like cosmetics, sarees, sugar, rice, spices, cattle, pulses, onion, chili, cardamom are being smuggled into the country through the borders.

Goods like electronics goods, old clothes, baby foods, powdered milk, crockeries and hilsha fish are being smuggled out of the country in large quantity every day.

Jury and Futala of Barabkha thana, Rabirbazar of Kulaura thana and Shamsnagar of Kamalganj thana are the main centres of the smugglers, it is learnt.

Two commit suicide

From Our Correspondent FARIDPUR, Apr 3: Two persons committed suicide in two thanas of the district recently.

Nasima Akter, 23, wife of Anwar Hossain of village Shaikubi under Sadarpur thana committed suicide by taking poison.

Family feud was reportedly to be the cause of the suicide. A case was lodged. Sabita age 12, daughter of Khondaker Alauddin of village Chator under Boalmari thana committed suicide by taking poison.

It is reported that Sabita used to work as maid-servant in the house of one Matiar Rahman in the same village. She was reportedly suffering from pain in the stomach for a pretty long time. On the day of occurrence she took poison due to unbearable pain, it is learnt.

A case was lodged.

SSC candidates fall by 45 pc from JEB this yr

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, April 3: Seventy five thousand 691 candidates including 44,462 males and 31,229 females will appear in the ensuing SSC examination from two groups under Jessor Education Board (JEB) this year. The SSC examination that was originally scheduled to commence from Mar 28, last, will be held from April 07, next. Date has been shifted following political crisis said board sources.

According to reports, 52,996 candidates including 27,846 males and 25,152 females will appear from social science group. Another 730 candidates including 443 males and 287 females will appear as private from same group, the report added.

From science group, 21,915 candidates including 16,171 males and 5,742 females will appear. Total number of centre in 16 districts of Khulna and Barisal Divisions under Jessor Education Board is 155.

When contacted Acting Chairman, JEB who is also Controller of Examinations, Professor Nazim Uddin told the Daily Star that total SSC candidates of this year is 70,000 less than that of last year, that is down by 45 per cent. Last year number of candidate was 143,992.

In reply to a question, the Chairman said that all preliminaries have by now, been completed to hold examinations.

Drug stores without valid papers doing business

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Apr 3: The owners of about 200 medicine shops have been functioning without license and offering requisite facilities in different areas of Satkhira district for quite a long time.

According to a businessman holding licence of Satkhira town, the owners of these unregistered medicine shops have been running their business allegedly by paying bribe money amounting from Taka 500 to Taka 3000 on monthly basis to the office of the Drug Superintendent stationed at Khulna district.

The duty of the Drug Super and his staff is to supervise and detect the medicine shops running without drug licences. But normally they allegedly do not perform their assigned duty hoping to get illegal gratification from the owners of unlicensed medicine shops.

Meanwhile, many of these unregistered medicine shops have been carrying out their business by selling sub-standard banned and date expired medicines endangering the lives of the consumers for a long time.

In large number of pharmacies even some having valid licences also lack requisite facilities and proper environment for preserving and selling of medicines in appropriate temperature in clear showcases and some in refrigerators.

But such unethical business is running throughout the district before the very nose of both, drug and local civil administration officials and they were reluctant to take legal action against these illegal businessmen for some unknown reason. Although, repeated directives were given by the ministries concerned for taking action against the owners of these illegal medicine shops.

Miscreants collecting toll Truck drivers being harassed on highways

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 3: The extortionists have been active in Nagarbari-Bogra-Dinajpur road in Sirajganj binding smooth plying of vehicles carrying fertilizers and fuel. Tolls are being collected forcibly from the truck drivers, tanklorries and even from rickshaws, rickshaw vans and tempos carrying goods.

It is learnt from Md Naosher Ali, General Secretary of Baghabari Ghat Tanklorry Transport Workers' Union that unruly youths snatched away money from the driver of Tanklorry No Dhaka Ta 3060 while coming back from Jaldhaka in Nilphamari district after unloading fuel on last March 19. On the same day, Tanklorry No Bogra Ta 6721 was damaged at Majhira on way to Bogra from Baghabari ghat when the driver refused to pay tolls.

The workers' union alleged that the extortionists are active at different points of Nagarbari-Bogra highway including Ulapara, Bhuyanganti, Chandaikona in Sirajganj district and Majhira, Mahastanganj, Mohamtala, Gobindganj, Palashbari, Fashitala, Katakhal, Pirganj, Kamarpur, Dhperrhat, Pirganj, Thaldighi, Mithapukur, Bara Dargha and Mathpuri in Bogra and Gaibandha districts. The extortionists collect tolls putting barricade on the North Bengal highway. The officials of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation at Baghabari Ghat have sent messages to the Divisional Commissioner and Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Rajshahi to ensure security on the highways.

Visiting Baghabari Ghat oil depots of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) it was revealed from the oil companies that one crore metric tons of diesel including 20 lakh metric tons in pipeline remain stuck at Baghabari depots. If smooth movement of tanklorries are ensured by intensifying security measures on Nagarbari-Bogra highway there will be no crisis of fuel in the northern zone.

Cheating villagers

From Abu Ahmed

SATKHIRA, Apr 3: About 35 innocent people have reportedly been cheated by illegal manpower agents in the district. Illegal manpower business has penetrated every corner in the rural areas of Satkhira district and the innocent people have been falling easy prey to such cheats.

According to report, an organised group is engaged in illegal manpower business in the district. They allegedly allure the people giving them hope of golden future. The common people are cheated by this group. It was alleged by many.

It is learnt that tendency among the rural people to go abroad is increasing day by day and a section of corrupt people is taking this opportunity by cheating the innocent villagers. The victims quarrel take between Taka 80,000 and one lakh from each persons promising to send them to Malaysia or to any Middle Eastern nation. Job-seekers who are sent to Malaysia this way reportedly fail to get any job.

Moreover, on return from foreign jails these people lock into battles with the "cheats". Such an incident has been unveiled recently.

Abul Kalam Azad of village Laxmidia under Sadar thana took Taka 80,000 from each, Abdul Mazid, Aminur Rahman both from the same village and Akbar Gazi of village Bhonra all under Sadar thana, assuring them of job in Malaysia. One of the victims, Aminur Rahman, filed case with the court of First Class Magistrate Satkhira recently.

Jessore Public Library: A model for all

From Atiur Rahman

JESSORE, April 3: Jessore Public Library (JPL) is a landmark in the history of modern library science in the country. It acts as a model for all non-government public libraries in the country. Founded in 1851, the library has contributed immensely to various cultural activities.

The JPL was founded three years after enactment of Public Library Act by British Parliament in 1850. Establishment of Woodburn Public Library in Bogra, the Rangpur Public Library and the Barisal Public Library was followed by JPL. All these Public Libraries were established under private initiative.

One of the six oldest Public Libraries in the sub-continent, JPL is by far the best and largest in the country. There is no denying the fact that communication between the East and West was opened with the foundation of Bengal Asiatic Society by William Jones in Calcutta in 1784. It offered the west their access to literature, arts and cultural of the East.

It is learnt that the then Jessore Collector RC Reeks established JPL by the fund of zamindars or landlords of Narail and Nalganda estates. A portion of total cost was also shared by European Indigo Planters. These planters selected different sites in Jessore and settled down for indigo cultivation from 1795.

According to sources, indigo cultivation was most rewarding and profitable of all crops in those days. As such, they concentrated all their energy and attention to its cultivation more extensively.

As headquarters, Jessore became important for them. They used to come here frequently from their rural stations and stay back for days together in connection with business affairs. In fact, Jessore was then in infant stage of development as a town, having no amenities of civic life. Dearth of place for reading room, library and club for

recreation were the main reasons why JPL came into being to meet those psychologic demands. At the outset, JPL served purpose of dignified personalities, foreign visitors and local elites only. This practice continued till departure of the indigo planters from the area.

In 1909, JPL was shifted to Town Hall. Noted educationalist and pioneer of National Library Movement, Professor Sharif Hossain, giving vivid description about functioning

momentum across the sub-continent. People from all walks of life participated in the movement. JPL later was housed in the Bishwanath Sarker (B Sarker) Memorial Hall, built by Abontosh Chandra Sarker, a member of Jessore Bar in memory of his beloved father, in 1927.

Noted philanthropist and ex-Chairman, Jessore District Board, Rai Bahadur Jadunath Majumder is still remembered for great deal of contribution to the uniform development of

Municipality for temporary accommodation. After end of the World War-II the library was brought back to its original building in 1946. But it was badly damaged and rendered quite unfit for any use. No positive efforts were made immediately for its repair due to fund constraint.

The history of JPL presents deplorable picture during the period from 1948 to '53. Partition of Bengal in 1947 left JI in total mismanagement and disarray. It was occupied by anti-people and reactionary elements. Advocate, Badrul Alam took over charge of JI as General Secretary under blessings of ruling party Muslim League.

He cancelled membership of all progressive persons in single swoop and got a few of them arrested on charge of subversive activities. Situations change after Kowshan Ali was elected General Secretary in 1957.

Meanwhile Jessore Institute celebrated its first anniversary in 1955 with financial aid from the United Front Government for its all-out development. When all sections of JI were reactivated and strengthened, attention of the management was paid to the publication of quarterly Mukul. Simultaneously, school for musical training was set up to provide scope for development of artistic faculties.

During this period, Professor Sharif Hossain, acted side by side with Rowshan Ali and brought radical change in over-all functioning of Jessore Institute. However, it suffered a terrible setback after promulgation of Martial Law in the then Pakistan under President Ayub Khan. All activities of JI remained suspended during this time.

It passed the juncture very safely and thorough reform was effected to update the JI in keeping with norms of library science. JI marked tremendous progress under dynamic leadership of Professor Sharif Hossain. In fact he was architect of every programme of development of JI. He was the

founder Book Bank of Jessore Institute. Book Bank is an institution from where books as per requisition, are supplied to other Book banks in outer stations on condition of return within fixed date. Supply of books on different subjects, journals, magazines and papers to other Book Banks, Libraries and reading centres against written contract are highlights of it.

No individual person is allowed to take book for use at home. Source said that JPL supplies books and other reading materials to 55 book-banks based in rural areas from Regional Central Book Bank free of charge. It is unprecedented in this zone of the country indeed.

In 1978-79, government appointed James Stephen Parker as professional adviser to survey existing position of Public Libraries in the country and reported back with recommendation for development. Source said that Parker in his comprehensive report, detailed all aspects of JI and suggested the government to accept its central Book-Bank

as model to achieve greater height of success in library movement all over the country. Interestingly, JI preserves lot of valuable works including 'origin of species' by Darwin published in 1878. Reports on Jessore District by James Washlander, published in 1878 from Calcutta with other 86 rare English and 53 Bengali collections. Besides 75,000 books and 200 manuscripts are also collected from different places for preservation in

as Advisor. Professor Moshui Azam did lot in collecting manuscripts from distant places of Jessore and Faridpur districts. Most manuscripts, received from Ram Narayan Public Library founded in 1907 at Lohagara in Narail, by way of donation are preserved in Manuscript division of JI.

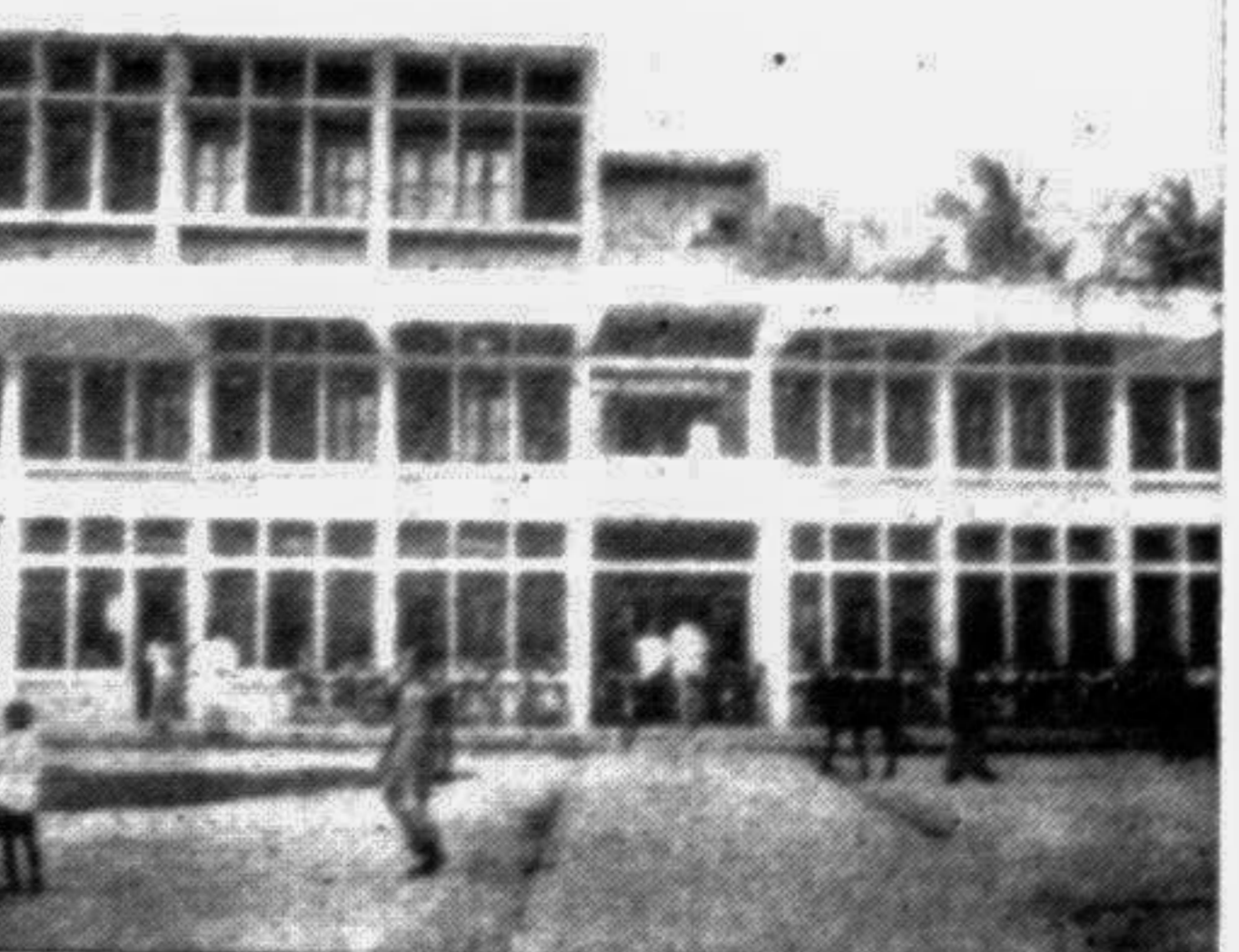
It maintains a number of clubs including drama club, Sports club, Town Club, one Primary school, Asia Foundation, American Cultural Centre, Indian Embassy and many other organisations have presented wide varieties of books to this institute from time to time. A special library was built for children in 1984.

Lot of weeklies, fortnightly, monthlies besides dailies are received here as complimentary copies. The Book-Bank Hall was constructed in 1978 by the fund of Khulna Divisional Development Board. It has separate arrangement for both ladies and gents. The construction of 250 seat capacity hall for reading room purpose is nearing completion.

Donations received by JI from organisations included Jessore District Administration, Jessore Education Board, Jessore Municipality, Khulna Divisional Development Board, National Book Centre, Education Ministry, Asia Foundation, Jessore Sadar Upazila and many others.

Book Fair is held under initiative of Jessore Institute every year with programme of competition on different subjects, to attract visitors to develop reading habit. Jessore Institute has 20 member committee of management to run its functioning. The committee is elected from among its members for a term of three years.

Jessore Institutes is historic monument to glorify cultural tradition of Jessore over the years.



The library building — Star photo



Readers inside the library — Star photo