

National

News snaps

Arsenic-free water to be supplied

BARISAL, Jan 2: Three thanas of the district will be supplied with arsenic-free drinking water under a Public Health Engineering Department project, beginning next month, reports APB.

Fourteen ponds will be dug or re-excavated at a cost of Tk 17.5 lakh under its 'Pond Sand Filter' project in Gournadi, Muliadi, Hizla and Banipara thanas where at least 10 people have so far died due to arsenic contamination of groundwater. Sources in the local office of PHED said the ponds will be protected from trespass and pollution by barbed wire fencing or boundary walls. Bathing, clothes-washing and fish cultivation will not be allowed. Three-stage sand filtering system will be set up by the banks of the ponds and purified water will be supplied to the consumers without chlorine.

Additional 24,000 VGF cards allocated

JAMALPUR, Jan 2: The government has allocated additional 24,000 Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) cards for the flood-affected destitute families of the district, reports UNB.

With these, said the officials, the total number of VGF cards in the district rose to 98,100. The officials said almost all the additional cards, allocated last month have been distributed among the poor families in order to support them during their hardship in the post-flood period. Earlier, the authorities distributed 1,000 cards each in 68 unions, 3,100 in Jamalpur Poushavara and 3,000 in Sharishabari Poushavara. The authorities admitted that a very small number of irregularities were reported about distribution of the cards and they took measures accordingly.

FP activities hampered

RANGAMATI, Jan 2: The Family Planning (FP) activities in the district are seriously being hampered due to indifference and negligence of duty by the concerned employees and officials, reports UNB.

Local people complained that the field level workers of the department, who used to give frequent visits in the past, are now even not providing necessary appliances to the target couples in the localities. They said particularly in the municipal area, hardly any worker of the Family Planning Department can be seen visiting the fertile couples. The officials, however, said the number of field workers is too inadequate to cover the total area of the district and there is only two field workers for the municipal area here. The total number of field workers in the district is 145. They said in the town, some non-government organisations are working in this field. But the people complained that there is duplication in the programmes run by the government department and NGOs in different parts of the district.

Young man kidnapped, killed

JESSORE, Jan 2: A young man was kidnapped and stabbed to death allegedly by Sharabahara Party men in Abhoynagar thana of the district recently, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Jahangir Hossain, 24, of Subhorara village. Police said a group of activists of the party abducted the victim, Jahangir from his sweetmeat shop in a local bazaar at gun point and stabbed him to death at a nearby place. Police later recovered the body and sent it to the Jessore General Hospital morgue for autopsy. The reason behind the murder could not be known immediately. Another message adds: A young man was killed in a road accident on Jessore-Benapole highway near the town recently. The victim, identified as Abdul Manan, 30, of Dhopkhola village in sadar thana succumbed to his injuries on way to Jessore General Hospital.

Volunteer Day observed

RANGAMATI, Jan 2: A discussion meeting jointly organised by the International Association of Volunteer Efforts (IAVE) and Green Hill, a local non-government organisation, was held recently at Rangamati General Hospital in observance of the International Volunteer Day, reports BSS.

Dipankar Talukder MP, chairman of the task force on repatriated tribals and internal refugee rehabilitation affairs was present on the occasion as the chief guest. Chairman of Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council Ching Kew Roza was the special guest. Gaminii Gunasingha, national representative of the IAVE, Bangladesh presented the key-note paper. NGO representatives and social activists attended the function.

Rally of freedom fighters

CHUADANGA, Jan 2: The local Freedom Fighters Command observed 'Chuadanga Mukto Dibosh' (Chuadanga liberation day) here recently, reports APB.

On this day 27 years ago, the area was liberated from the Pakistani occupation forces by the freedom fighters. The Command observed the day through an elaborate programme. The programme included a rally of freedom fighters at Srimati Town Hall, discussion meetings and staging of drama based on events of the Liberation War. President of the district unit of the Command, Shamsul Alam Manik, district Awami League leader and freedom fighter advocate Yunus Ali and a large number of freedom fighters including Mozammel Haque attended the programme.

Chuadanga Bar Assoc executives

CHUADANGA, Jan 2: The annual election of Chuadanga District Bar Association was held recently at the bar association hall here, reports BSS.

Advocate Yunus Ali and Advocate Rafiur Rahman were elected president and general secretary respectively of the executive committee of the bar association. Other office-bearers: Vice-presidents — Advocate Moslem Uddin and Advocate Ranjit Kumar Ghose and joint secretaries — Advocate Nurul Islam and Advocate Shahidul Islam. Out of the total 120 members of the bar association 111 caste votes in the election.

Wheat allocated for uplift projects

MAGURA, Jan 2: In a bid to implement 316 development projects in four thanas of the district within the stipulated time, the government has allocated 1261 metric tones of wheat for the current dry season, reports UNB.

Work of the projects, undertaken by Relief and Disaster Ministry under Food for Work Programme, included construction and reconstruction of roads and embankments, plantation of saplings and construction of pipe culverts. Of the wheat, 448 metric tonnes were sanctioned for implementation of 127 projects in Sadar thana, 267 mt for 68 projects in Sreepur thana, 298 mt for 64 projects in Mymensingh thana and 248 mt for 57 projects in Shalikha thana. Works on the projects are likely to start sometime in the current month and expected to be completed by May, 1999.

Ambulances lying inoperative

JHALAKATI, Jan 2: Two ambulances of the two hospitals of the district have been lying inoperative since long causing sufferings to the emergency patients, reports UNB.

Official sources said the ambulances of Jhalakati Modern Hospital and Nalchitt Thana Health Complex remained inoperative since September 1997 and March this year respectively following separate road accidents. Sadar hospital failed to get sanction of only Tk 29,000 from the office of the Director General of the Health Department to repair the engine of the ambulance due to alleged corruption in the department. On the other hand, the other ambulance was lying inoperative since nine months as an inquiry team formed to assess the damage of it failed to submit its report till now.

Sugarcane worth Tk 5 lakh gutted

ISHWARDI, Jan 2: About 500 metric tonnes of sugarcane worth about Tk 5 lakh were gutted at Umirpur in Ishwardi Poushavara area last week, reports APB.

Locals said the canes on about 11 hectares of land caught fire from a source still unknown and got ravaged in the afternoon on last Wednesday. Fire fighters from Pabna with the help of locals extinguished the flame as Fire Brigade's local unit lacked sufficient equipment. The fire affected a total of 20 cane growers, who sought help to Pabna Sugar Mill authorities to subsidise their losses.

Nine hurt in clash over land dispute

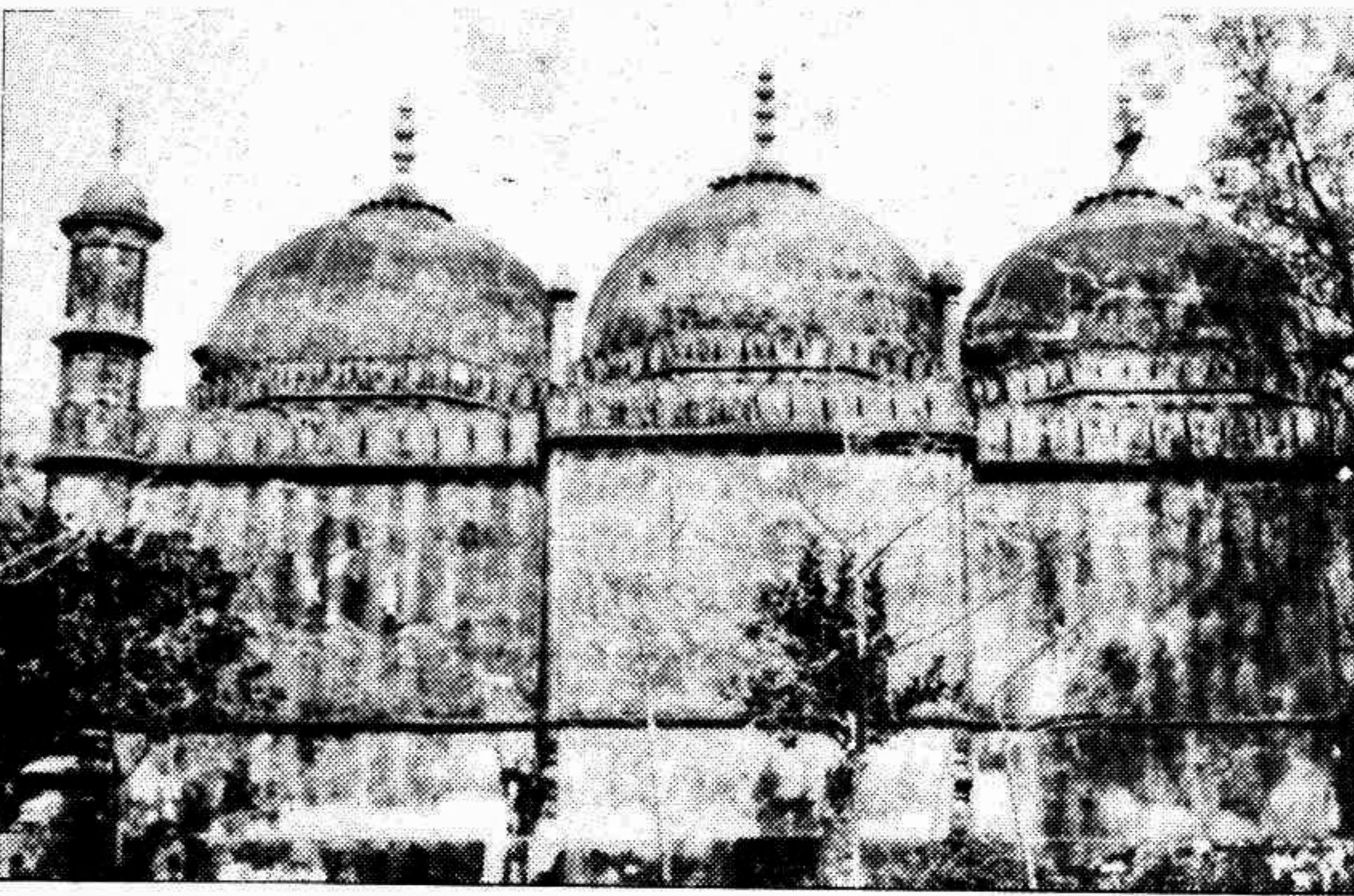
JHENIDAH, Jan 2: At least nine people, one of them seriously, were injured in a clash between two rival groups over a land dispute at Nazirhat village in Shalakupa thana recently, reports UNB.

Police said the clash ensured between the two groups of Shamsul Alam and Majid Ali of the same village when Dabiruddin of Shamsul Alam group went to sow seedlings on the disputed land. Five of the injured were sent to Shalakupa Thana Health Complex. They were identified as Dabiruddin, 25, Kalam Hossain, 21, Rustam, 55, Islam, 32, and Palan, 30. A case was filed with the police. Meanwhile, police arrested a man from Juka village in Shalakupa thana on Friday. The arrested, identified as Abdul Latif, 30, was said to be the activist of the outlawed Biplabi Communist Party.

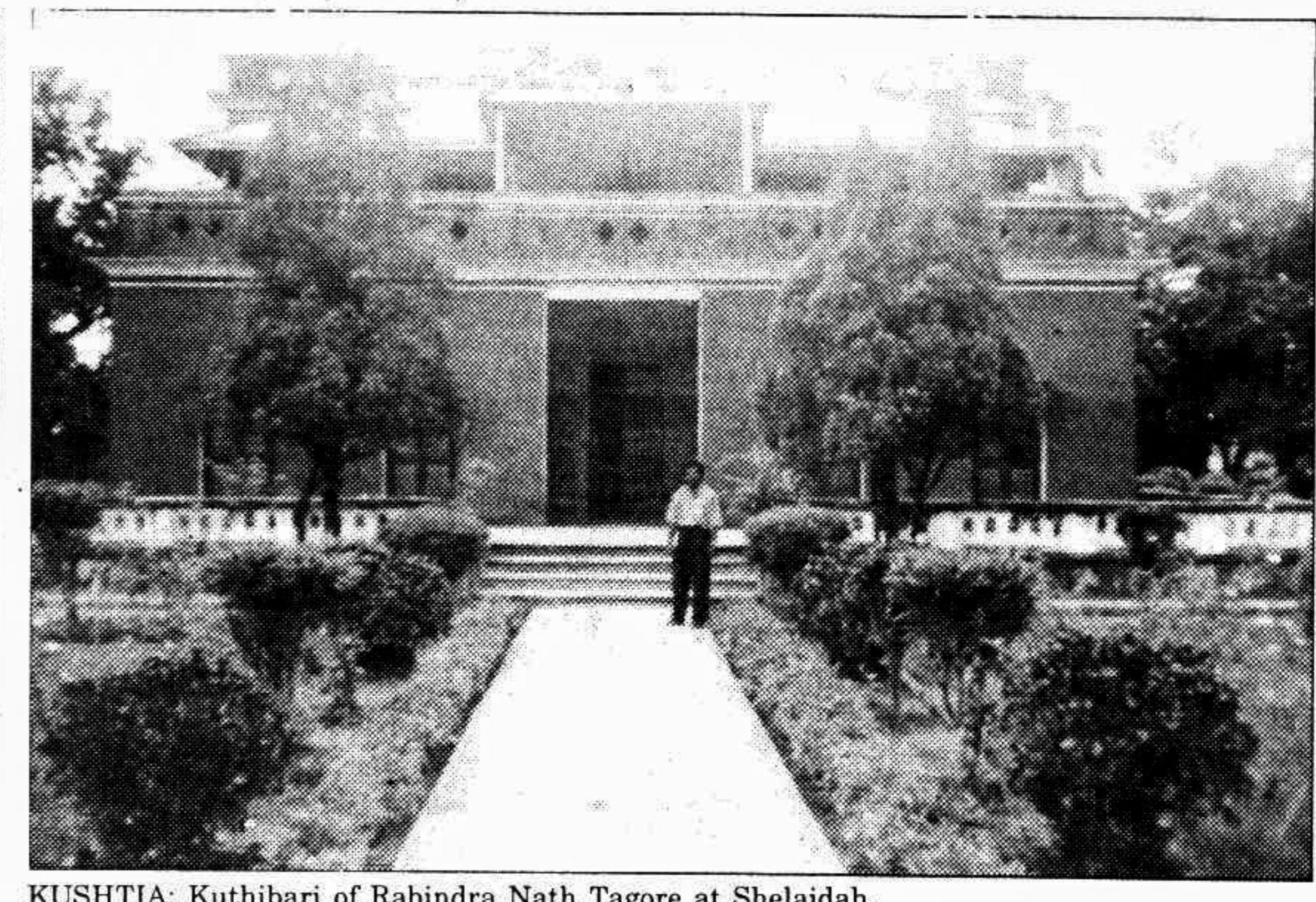
Massive 'Rabi' crops farming scheme

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 2: The Agricultural Extension Department (AED) has taken up a massive cultivation programme in this 'Rabi' season in Cox's Bazar district, reports BSS.

The programme will be implemented in seven thanas. Crops like 'Boro' paddy, pulse, sweet potato, potato, groundnut, maize, winter vegetables, spices, and other crops will be cultivated under the programme. According to the AED sources, high yielding variety of 'Boro' paddy will be cultivated on 36831 hectares and local variety on 187 hectares. Besides, a total of 600 hectares has been brought under potato cultivation in the district.



KUSHTIA: Jhoudia mosque, constructed about 200 years ago by a saint who preached Islam in the area.



KUSHTIA: Kuthibari of Rabindra Nath Tagore at Shelaibad.

Turn historical places of greater Kushtia into tourist spots'

From Fakhrun Nessa

KUSHTIA, Jan 2: There is a bright prospect of attracting tourists from home and abroad if many historical places of greater Kushtia district are turned into tourist spots.

For this purpose a perspective plan is necessary and basic facilities should be provided at different places of great interest such as Shelaibad Kuthibari, Laloni's Mausoleum, Mujib Nagar, Amjhupi Rest House, Jhoudia Mosque. Many other places of historical interest are spread all over the district which may be treated as tourist resorts.

Shelaibad Kuthibari, the residence of Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore is a pala-

cial building having unique ar-

chitectural beauty and ancient

heritage of Bengal. The building

has been taken over by the Ar-

chaeological Department for its

proper preservation. But it

needs more attention and care.

Many visitors visit the spot

throughout the year. The spot is

eight miles off Kushtia town

across the river Gorai. At pre-

sent there is a good communica-

tion system from here to the

rest of the country. The pucca

road leading to Kuthibari has

been constructed by Kushtia

Zilla Parishad at cost of Taka

30 lakh which was provided by

the then Khulna Divisional De-

velopment Board. Rabindra

Nath Tagore spent most of his

busy life here writing a good

number of poems including

'Dui Bigha Jami'.

Lalon Mausoleum is located

at Cheuria, one mile away from

Kushtia town. There are graves

of Lalon Shah and his follow-

ers. A library has been set up

here to preserve the works of

Lalon who is regarded as the

spiritual leader of tens of thou-

sands of Bauls. They flock to-

gether here at the annual Laloni

Festival which is held here for

many years. Steps have been

taken for the research work of

Lalon Shah's works. Mean-

while, it has been revealed that

Lalon was not only a great poet

but also a great spiritual leader

of his time.

It is well known that great

poet Rabindra Nath Tagore had

been inspired by the songs of

this great 'Baul'. It has already

been reflected in many of his

poems later on.

Mujib Nagar is located in

Meherpur situated at the extre-

me border point of India.

During our Liberation War,

the first Government of the People's

Republic of Bangladesh was

formed here and Mujib Nagar

was declared as the capital of

Bangladesh. After the War of

Independence Mujib Nagar was

given a special status and a

function is held here every

year on April 17. On this day

the Government of the People's

Republic of Bangladesh was

formed here. To make it well-

known to the people of the

world some positive steps are

required to preserve the na-

tional heritage. The place must

be turned into a fully-fledged

tourists resort. Meanwhile,

a mausoleum has already been

constructed here reflecting 23

years of colonial rule of Pak-

istani hordes. But many more

things are required to be done

here. It has been learnt, the pre-

sent government has taken a gi-

ant plan in this respect to

attract foreign tourists.

Amjhupi Rest House is an-

other ideal place to attract

tourists. It is located at

Meherpur, four miles away

from Meherpur town. Estab-

lishment of this rest house

dates back to the beginning of

British rule in this subconti-

nent. It is said that Lord Clive

conspired against Nawab Siraj-ud-doula at this place. He ultimately won the war against the last Nawab of Bengal and established the British rule in India. Amjhupi Rest House can be turned into a tourist resort if proper steps are taken in right direction. Similarly there are many more places in this district which can attract lots of tourists if these are preserved properly.

There is another place at Kushtia which is known as Jhoudia Mosque. The mosque was built two hundred years. It was said to be built by a great saint who was reportedly engaged in spreading Islam in this area.

A case was filed with the police.

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