

News snaps

Criminals take away transit goods

BENAPOLE, Feb 28: Organised gangs of criminals forcibly take away transit goods from the Benapole land port, according to Customs authorities, reports APB.

They allege that some known criminals threaten guards, enter into the sheds for imported goods and take away whatever items they like. When police go to round them up they hide in shops illegally raised by the roadside. Customs authorities said they repeatedly requested the thana administration to take action against the criminals and to remove the illegal shops, but no action has been taken.

Alleged smuggler arrested

NAOGAON, Feb 28: The Task Force formed to prevent smuggling on Tuesday arrested an alleged international smuggler from Dabpatti area of the town and recovered heroin worth about Tk 20 lakh from his possession, reports UNB.

The arrested was identified as Nareesh Chandra Shaha. Police said combined force of police and BDR led by a magistrate, acting on a tip-off, raided the Dabpatti shop of Nareesh and arrested him with heroin weighing 200 grams. Police suspected Nareesh to be a member of the international smugglers group.

Science fair concludes

PATUAKHALI, Feb 28: A science fair was organised at the Government Women College in observance of the 22nd Science and Technology Week, reports APB.

More than one hundred educational institutions participated in the three-day fair that began on February 15. 'Science and technology for life' was the theme of the fair. Discussion meetings and debates were also organised on the occasion. Deputy Commissioner M Habibullah inaugurated it.

Money, clothes distributed

PATUAKHALI, Feb 28: The district administration and local philanthropists have distributed money and warm clothes to 500 distressed people in six thanas here, reports APB.

Official sources said that warm clothes were also distributed to inmates of seven orphanages and 28 prisoners at Patuakhali jail. Twelve blind destitutes were given Tk 500 each. Local BNP leaders claimed that they also distributed warm clothes to 300 people.

Rice, pulse distributed

CHANDPUR, Feb 28: The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society has distributed 40,000 kg of rice and 8,000 kg of Musur Dal (pulse) among 2,000 distressed families as relief under its post-flood rehabilitation programme, reports APB.

The relief materials were distributed in Chandpur Sadar, Haimchar, Hajiganj, Matlab, Shaharasi and Faridganj thanas. Red Crescent sources said. Members of Jubo Red Crescent participated in the distribution programme.

Fund for drains construction

MAGURA, Feb 28: The Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) has allocated Tk 26,58,000 for construction of pucca drains in the town, reports APB.

The Executive Engineer of Magura PHED said the funds will be used to construct 2.5 km pucca drains and repair the old and damaged ones. Work on the project will begin in March and is expected to be completed by June. The funds have been provided under a Dutch assistance for water distribution and drainage programme for 18 towns.

Highways construction work starts

FENI, Feb 28: Work on a 2.75 crore taka programme for reconstruction of four highways in the district has started, reports APB.

The Feni-Belonia, Feni-Noakhali, Feni-Sonagazi and Feni Bypass roads will be reconstructed under the programme, expected to be completed by June this year.

3 killed in separate incidents

SATKHIRA, Feb 28: Three people were killed in separate incidents in the district last week, police said, reports UNB.

Yasin Ali, 30, son of Afzal of Khejuria, was killed in a tragic traffic mishap when a Satkhira-bound truck, from Kaliganj run over him on Satkhira-Kaliganj road in Debhata thana recently.

In another accident, vegetable grocer Ahmed Ali, 40, was crushed under the wheels of a mini bus on Satkhira-Jessore highway at Labsha in Sadar thana. An unidentified villager was gunned down by robbers while committing robbery at a house in Lakidari village in Assasuni thana. Three others were also injured in the gunfire.

466 arrested in Sylhet

SYLHET, Feb 28: As a part of countrywide special drive, police arrested 466 people from different parts of the district in the last fortnight, reports UNB.

Of them, 184 were arrested under GR cases, 165 under CR cases, 44 under section 54 and 73 on various charges. The recovered arms included three pipe-guns, two rounds of bullets, cartridges, cocktails and sharp weapons.

Wheat farming on 22,260 hectares

CHUADANGA, Feb 28: A total of 22,260 hectares has been brought under wheat cultivation in all the four thanas of Chuadanga district in the current wheat cultivation season, reports BSS.

The four thanas of Chuadanga district are Chuadanga Sadar, Alamdanga, Damurhuda and Jibannagar. According to an official source, during this season it is expected that about 50,000 tonnes of wheat would be produced in Chuadanga district. The condition of wheat in the field is found to be good.

The harvesting of wheat is expected to be started with 15 to 20 days.

Installation ceremony

NARSINGDI, Feb 28: The installation ceremony of the newly elected office bearers of Narsingdi Press Club was held at the district hall recently, reports BSS.

Minister for Science and Technology Lt Gen Noor Uddin Khan was present at the function as the chief guest with Prof Sitara Begum in the chair. Prof Surjyakanta Das, Principal of Narsingdi Government College administered the oath to the newly elected office bearers of the press club. The ceremony was also attended, among others, by General Secretary of the National Press Club Swapan Kumar Saha, President of Dhaka Reporters' Unity Shajahan Sardar, journalists Kartik Chatterjee, Shahid Chowdhury, Prof Pranab Chakrabarty, Prof Mohamad Ali, Advocate Badruddoja Zillu, Police Super Mokhesur Rahman and ADC Bijan Das.

Prizes distributed

MANIKGANJ, Feb 28: The National Science and Technology Week '99 concluded here at Government Devendra College recently, reports BSS.

On this occasion a prize giving ceremony was held at the college auditorium. The function was presided over by Prof Abdul Basir, Principal, Government Devendra College, Manikganj. Sheikh Mojaharuddin, Deputy Commissioner, Manikganj, distributed the prizes among the winners as the chief guest. The meeting was addressed, among others, by Md Abul Basar, Principal, an Bahadur Awlad Hossain Khan College, Manikganj, Prof A A Asaduzzaman, Ex-principal Government Devendra College, Prof Md Majibur Rahman, Prof Zillur Rahman, Vice Principal Government Devendra College, Abdul Wahab Chowdhury, Secretary, District Science and Technology Week Committee.

Pry edn hampered

SHERPUR, Feb 28: Primary education in the district is being hampered as books are yet to each most of the schools, teachers alleged, reports APB.

The Primary Education Department had a programme of distributing 6,46,920 books this year to students of 358 government and 249 private primary schools. But only 3,51,045 books, about 50 per cent of the requirement, have been distributed among students in five thanas, sources said. An official at the Primary Education Department, however, claimed that 60 per cent of books had already been distributed.

Smuggled goods seized

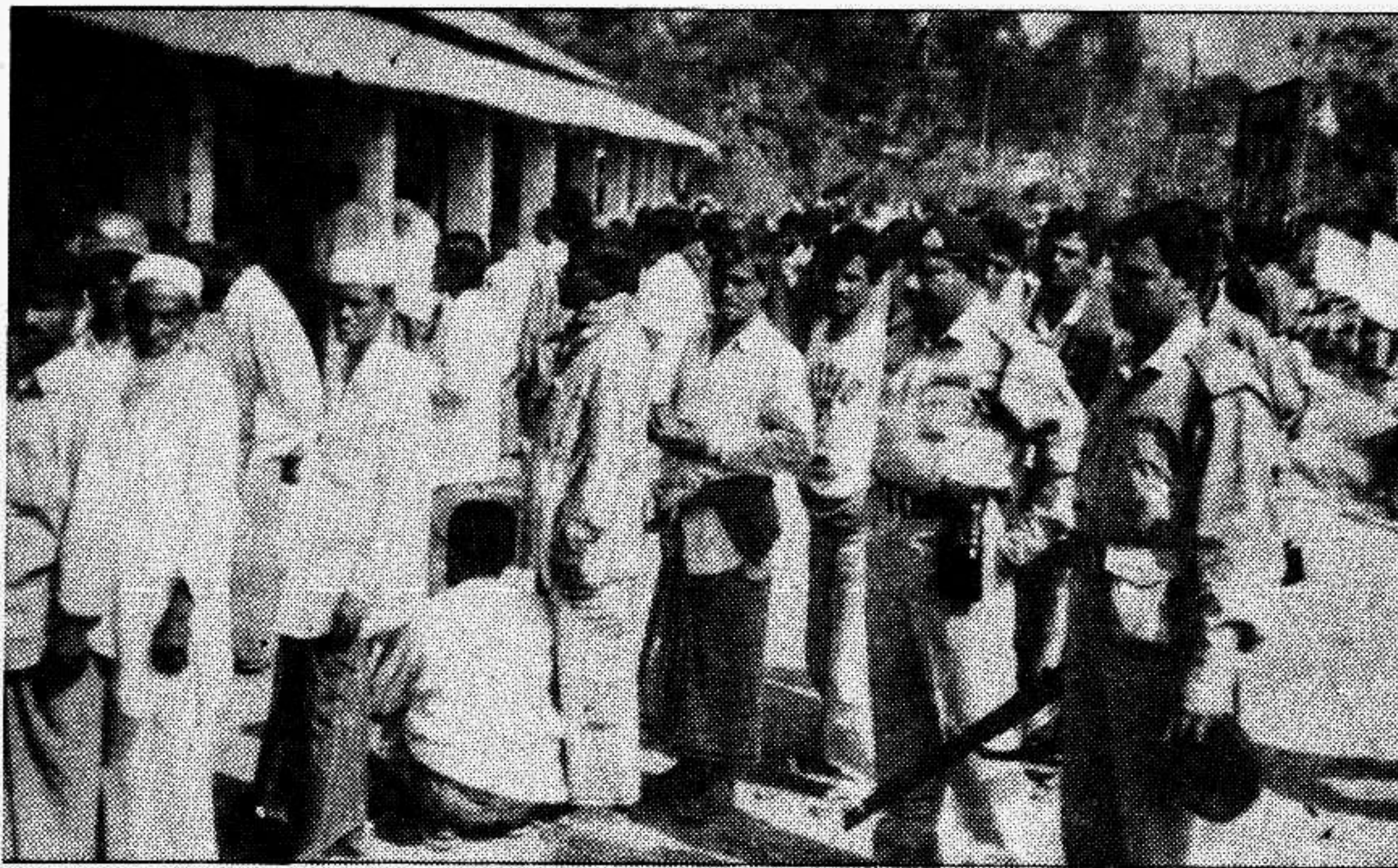
JESSORE, Feb 28: A Customs surveillance team seized smuggled goods worth over Tk 1.85 crore in last five months, reports UNB.

Officials said 75 departmental cases were filed with Sadar thana during the period of September 1998 to January last year. During the period, the surveillance team seized a huge quantity of sugar, saree, motor parts, medicine and electronic goods while being smuggled into the country from India. The team also seized used bandroll of bidi worth Tk 82,215 during the period and lodged a revenue fraud case with Abhoynagar police in this connection.

Man killed in road accident

SATKHIRA, Feb 28: One person was killed in a road accident at Debishahar on Satkhira-Kaliganj road in Debhata thana on Saturday, police and hospital sources said, reports BSS.

A speeding motor cycle hit Arshad Gazi, 30, of village Shibnagar in Debhata thana while he was crossing the road. He succumbed to his injuries at Satkhira Sadar Hospital on Sunday. The motor cycle rider fled.



KHAGRACHHARI: Municipal election was held in a free and fair atmosphere here on February 25. Mongkya Ching Chowdhury was elected as chairman by scoring 3,754 votes. — Star photo

Patients exploited in clinics in name of treatment

NATORE, Feb 28: Private clinics and pathological centres are doing brisk business here and other thana headquarters, reports UNB.

There are about 75 such private medical service centres here to conduct various tests and offer treatment, but the official sources could not provide the exact number of such establishments.

The owners of the clinics and centres are simply exploiting the patients in the name of treatment and pathological tests, complained some local people.

They further said many doctors serving in government hospitals have connections with these clinics and regularly suggest the patients to go to these medical service centres for better treatment.

Some of the doctors even in-

volve themselves in running such clinics violating the government rule, sources alleged.

A number of patients complained that the pathological centres are giving different results of tests for the same sample creating confusion and mistrust among the people.

Moreover, the doctors do not accept the report of any test conducted even a week ago and ask the patients to go for another test.

The clinics and centres are also violating relevant government rules for running such an establishment. According to the provision of the 1982 ordinance, a clinic or private hospital with 10 beds must have a doctor, three nurses and 80 square feet of space.

But medical establishments here are widely violating these rules as the authorities concerned are not taking any ac-

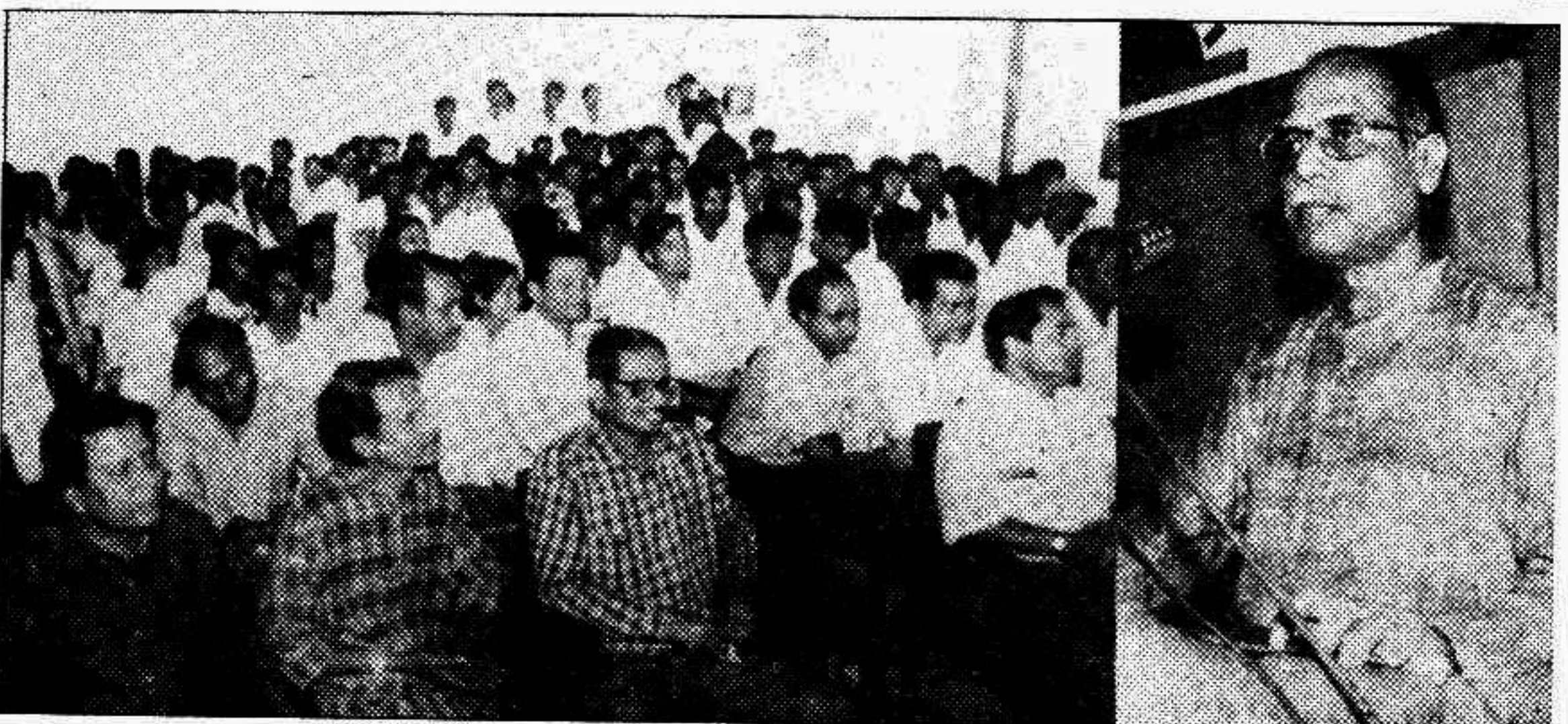
tion against them.

The prevailing situation has discouraged the people in taking treatment in the country and well-off section of the society prefer to go to India and other countries for treatment.

The standard of treatment and test in the clinics and path-labs in the thana level is too low, said the sources adding that these create frustration in the minds of the patients who use to come here with a hope of getting proper treatment.

On average, doctors charge between Tk 150 and Tk 300 from each patient as their fee for the first visit and Tk 100 to Tk 200 for subsequent visits. The fee for various tests range from Tk 150 to Tk 700.

A patient has to pay on average Tk 1,000 for laboratory tests and Tk 5,000 to Tk 25,000 for a case of surgical treatment.



CHITTAGONG UNIVERSITY: Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Abu Yousuf addressing recently at a freshers' reception programme of Chittagong University College. — Star photo

Separate incidents claim 6 lives in Habiganj, Mymensingh

HABIGANJ, Feb 28: A bicycle rider was crushed under the wheels of a bus on Thursday night at Dhuliakhali on Habiganj-Shayestaganj road, reports UNB.

Witnesses said Mostafa Mia, 44, of Bahula village in Sadar thana was returning home when the Habiganj-bound bus from Dhaka dashed him at about 10 pm. The victim died on the spot.

The driver of the bus managed to flee the scene. Another report from Jessore adds: Noor Islam Mandal, 30, an activist of Sramajibi Mukti Andolan, was shot dead allegedly by the outlawed Shababara party men on Sunday morning at a village in Bagerpara thana.

Mandal, son of Gahar Ali Lashkar of village Zalkar in Sadar thana, was going to his father-in-law's house in Nulia in the same thana when he was abducted by a group of miscreants numbering about 10.

The abductors took him to a village in the neighbouring Bagerpara thana and shot him dead. They also slaughtered him to confirm the death.

The cause of the murder could not be ascertained immediately. Meanwhile, two people including a child were crushed under the wheels of sapling vehicles in two road accidents here on Sunday.

Asia Khatun, 5, daughter of Lutfar Rahman of village Hargathi in Monirampur thana,

was crushed under the wheels of a Satkhira-bound bus near Khalkandha on Jessore-Satkhira road in the morning.

The other accident occurred near Benapole land port in the evening when Rubayet, 15, son of Yunus Sheikh of Benapole bazar, was run over by a speeding truck near the warehouse of the land port.

Both the bodies were brought

Pilferage of spare parts worth Tk 3.36,000 at Darwani Textile Mills

From Our Correspondent

NILPHAMARI, Feb 28: The only textile mill here namely 'Darwani Textile Mills' of BTMC is in partial operation since a long time.

Three fourth of the factory stands idle for shortage of cotton. Recently from the idle machines of the factory, spare parts worth Taka 3.36,000 were stolen. The report of the enquiry committee, set up to enquire into this pilferage could not satisfy the mills' CBA at whose demand, BTMC constituted a two-member enquiry team to reinvestigate into it.

Local management also filed GD entry with local police station. Police arrested two security guards and two other workers of the concerned department and sent them to the court.

to Jessore General Hospital for autopsy.

UNB reports from Mymensingh: A boy was killed and 25 others were hurt when a bus turned turtle on Halaughat road at Raghurampur in Sadar thana on Sunday, reports UNB.

The dead identified as Ali Hossain, 12, hailed from Dhoabura in Munshirhat. Police said, the mishap occurred at 1 pm as the driver of the ill-fated Halaughat-bound vehicle lost control over its steering.

Of the wounded, six were rushed to the district Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Another message adds: A 22-year old young man allegedly committed suicide on Monday by taking pesticide when he failed to persuade his wife to bring to his residence from his father-in-law's house.

Family sources said, Rafiqul Islam of Chamiadi of Valuka thana married Nazma, 18, daughter of Taleb Hossain of Bhiabo village of the same thana two years back.

Nazma has been residing in her father's house since her marriage. Rafiqul on the fateful day went to her and requested her to come to his house which she turned down. At this the frustrated husband allegedly took pesticides to commit suicide.

He was rushed to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead.

Over 70 pc villagers do not use sanitary latrine in Gopalganj

From Alimuzzaman

GOPALGANJ, Feb 28: More than 70 per cent people in rural areas of five thanas here do not use sanitary latrine.

According to the reports, about 10 lakh people live in rural areas of five thanas here. Majority of the villagers discharge human waste in the bushes, barren land, bank of the canal, pond or river and crop land. As a result, human waste mixes with water of canals, ponds, rivers, beels and pollutes environment.

The Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) sources said they are supplying water sealed latrine's equipment from their thana offices at a low cost. But due to lack of awareness people of the rural areas do not show interest to set up water sealed latrines in their houses.

Thirty-seven per cent people use of sanitary latrine in rural

areas here, official report says. It is mentioned that, 1,96,336 families living in rural areas of the district. Of them 72,644 families use sanitary latrine. A local doctor named Kulapado Biswas of village Bonnia Bari in Tungipara thana told

The Daily Star correspondent, only 15 per cent people use sanitary latrine. As a result due to lack of good sanitation rural people including children suffer from diarrhoeal diseases around the year.

Hahmdia Khatun, a social worker in Tungipara thana, told this correspondent that a large number of children belonging to poor families of the village areas do not use latrines at all.

When contacted with Lalima, Assistant Headmaster of Balakir High School in the sadar thana, he told this corre-

spondent that 10 per cent people of rural areas use sanitary latrine.

Some local leaders in village areas of Kotalipara thana said, some families in their areas use kutcha latrines which mostly stand on the banks of rivers, beel and canals. By allowing human waste to fall into rivers, beels and canals from such latrines they pollute water.

DPHE observes Sanitation Week throughout the country every year. But the rural people who live in poverty are not actually motivated for using sanitary latrines and safe water due to lack of direct contact with the DPHE people, they alleged.

Local leaders and experts have appealed to the authorities concerned to take necessary steps for motivating poor rural people for good sanitation.



DAUDKANDI: Veteran freedom fighter Major General (Retd) Muhammad Subed Ali Bhuiyan addressing recently at a discussion meeting arranged in observance of the seventh founding anniversary of Juranpur Adarsha College which he founded.

Vendors causing traffic jams along busy highways in Natore

NATORE, Feb 28: Occupation of thoroughfares and highways by the vendors has been causing traffic jams at many places and putting the passers-by in trouble, reports UNB.

Local people said many rural

markets and hats sit besides the busy highways causing many accidents.

Major hats and bazars include Bandar Bazar, Jamtoli Bazar, Sherkol hats and Shingra hats on Dhaka-Natore highway via Bogra, Bonarpura hats, Rajpur hats, Dhanaidha Bazar and Tebaria hats on Natore-Nagarbari highway and Gurpatti, Chandpur, Kalfurai, Tokia and Ekda on Natore-Rajshahi road.

Paddy, rice, jute, wheat, oil seeds, pulses, betel leaf, banana, vegetables, molasses, raw leather, fish and different fruits are being traded at these hats and bazars on the highways almost everyday.

The rush of buyers and sellers create traffic congestion at many points particularly during the weekly market days. Many buses, coaches and trucks

and other vehicles become stranded at these points causing immense suffering to the passengers.

The traffic movement has increased many times on these highways over the years and particularly following the opening of Bangabandhu Bridge over the river Jamuna.

Many passengers and drivers complained that their vehicles remain stranded for hours together at some points as the vendors occupy the roads delaying them unnecessarily.

The number of road accidents has also increased at these points and during the last six months there were about 160 small and big accidents on these routes.

According to official records, some 32 people were killed and 178 injured in these accidents.

The leaders of transport owners' association and transport workers have urged the authorities to take measures in this regard for ensuring smooth movement of traffic on the highways.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Sayeedur Rahman along with the proctor and other high officials of the university visiting recently different gardens. — Star photo

Erosion renders 23,800 families homeless in Madaripur

MADARIPUR, Feb 28: Rivers have devoured some 12,185 acres of land rendering at least 23,800 families homeless in four thanas of here in the last four years, reports APB.

The Padma, Arial Khan, Kumar and Palodi rivers have eroded the lands in the Sadar, Kalkini, Shibchar and Rajor thanas, officials sources said.

Arial Khan and Kumar rivers have eroded vast areas in 18 villages in the sadar thana, rendering about 5,000 families homeless.

Thirteen villages under Kalkini thana have been partially washed away by the Arial

Khan and the Palodi rivers.

Some 20 villages in Shibchar thana have been eroded by the mighty Padma and Arial Khan rivers.

The government has, meantime, taken up a project called 'Ashrayan' to rehabilitate the erosion-affected families in Kalkini thana.

Some homeless families have been sheltered in a newly set up 'ideal village' called 'Hri-doyandi' at Tekerhat in Rajor thana.

Nearly 15,600 landless families of Shibchar thana have taken shelter along the Bhangamawa highway.

One can cross border by paying Tk 30 to guards?

CHUADANGA, Feb 28: 'Why bother for a passport? One can cross the border by paying Tk 20 to 30 to border guards', was the simple reply from a young man, reports APB.

'People without passport get warmer treatment than the passport-holders', he told this correspondent during a recent visit to bordering Kutubpur village.

Cross-border movement of people and goods are almost free through Munshipur, Kutubpur, Thakurpur, Darsana, Neemtala, Rajpur, Baradi and Dhokhali and Kutubpur areas, local people alleged.

People go to India, do their shopping and return home without any problem.

Indian citizens also come in groups, do necessary work and go back home without any hindrance, they alleged.

People in bordering areas also invite their relatives from other parts of the country to visit India as their guests.

This correspondent saw rice, paddy, sugar, salt, sarees, lungis and innumerable other commodities being smuggled into Bangladesh. Substantial quantities of raw jute and other items were also being smuggled to India.

One BDR jawan at Darsana claimed, there is an acute shortage of security personnel to guard the border points. Nor is there any bank branch to deposit travel taxes, he said.



NATORE: Publication ceremony of poet Alek Sheikh's book of verses 'Shawr-O-Roudra Khungi Tare' was held here recently. Prof Zulfiqar Matin (Right) of Bangla Department in Rajshahi University and the author speaking there. — Star photo