

News snaps

Accused escapes

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, May 23: Haji Shahed, ring leader of an inter-district gang of 'car lifters' escaped from police custody on May 19 while being taken to Rajshahi from Bagerhat for appearing in the court in connection with a case.

Police said that he had escaped from the reserved air-conditioned compartment of the inter-city express train 'Kap-atakha' while five policemen meant for escorting him were sleeping. Haji Shahed alias Monir is an accused of 10 car lifting cases and a murder case. A dismissed police constable, Haji Shahed was helped by his second wife Bilkis Begum, 28, to escape from the train taking full advantage of negligence of duty of policemen. He escaped when the train reached Ishwardi, police of Bagerhat sadar thana said.

Arms, ammunition recovered

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, May 23: Personnel of Hatfajilpur police outpost recovered five pigeons and one round of ammunition from village Ratnai in Sailakupa thana on Sunday morning.

According to police, during police patrol a contingent of police led by SI Anwar Hossain ran after a gang of miscreants and the miscreants fled away from the scene leaving the arms.

Diarrhoea in Netrakona

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, May 23: Diarrhoea and viral fever have broken out in an epidemic form in different parts of the district.

About 8,000 people have been attacked with diarrhoea and viral fever in the rural areas during the last one month. According to physicians, the symptoms of viral fever are high temperature, pain all over the body and headache. Women and children are the common victims, they added.

UP chairman held

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, May 23: Kushtia police have arrested Saad Ahmed, former chairman of Ziaraki union recently on charge of killing Abul Kalam Azad of village Gopalpur under Ziaraki union of Sadar thana.

He was arrested from Chowrangt area of Kumarkhali thana on a tip-off. Abul Kalam Azad was murdered on March 31 and a murder case was filed in Kushtia police station on April 1, 1999. The accused remained absconding since then.

Nazrul's birth centenary

MUNSHIGANJ, May 23: The birth centenary of the National poet Kazi Nazrul Islam was observed, here recently in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

Different socio-cultural organisations arranged various programmes on this occasion. A colourful function was held under the auspices of the district Shishu Academy in its premises. The highlights of the programmes included painting, recitation and essay-writing contests. The function was rounded-off with Nazrul songs.

Snatcher arrested

NONHALI, May 23: A snatcher was arrested while he was on the way to the police station where he was taken with the help of a fish trader near Mitah Bazar in Rajpur thana. Police said, reports UNB.

According to police, while the trader Chinnu Gazi was going home the snatcher, identified as Mizanur Rahman Shamim, snatched him indiscriminately and snatched Tk 10,000. But hearing the hue and cry of the victim the local people rushed to the spot and caught the snatcher.

Drain construction scheme

SHARIATPUR, May 23: Local Government Engineering Department has taken up a scheme to construct a drain to remove water logging in the town area here at a cost of Tk 16 lakh, reports UNB.

Municipality chairman ABM Gias Uddin inaugurated the project work stretching from Motiharpur to Shariatpur town. Executive Engineer of LGED Mojibur Rahman, Sub-Assistant Engineer and local elite were present on the occasion.

Navigation hampered

SHERPUR, May 23: Navigation in the river Brahmaputra as well as irrigation on its banks are being hampered due to emergence of shoals and lack of dredging, reports UNB.

The Brahmaputra, once a turbulent river, has been narrowed down because of recession of water in its basin. As a result, irrigation is being hampered enormously at Beparipara, Dakpara, Bhagaldi, Kulurchar, Goyalerchar, Harindhara, Char Jangaldi, Balairchar, Halgara, Rouha, Betmari, Kamalerchar, Munshirchar and Khanua.

Growth of welding factories

CHITTAGONG, May 23: An unbridled growth of welding factories in the district has been posing a threat to public health, reports UNB.

The factories have sprung up on the main roads of Sadar, Shibganj, Gomastapur and Nachol thanas without government permission. Physicians said that the ultra violet ray of the welding machine is not only harmful for human eyes but also for atmosphere. People alleged electronic appliances in the dwelling houses have started damaging due to setting up of these factories in the residential areas.

Khagrachhari

KHAGRACHHARI: A reception was accorded recently to Jyotindra Bodhipriyo Lama alias Shantu Lama (2nd from right), Chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council by Khagrachhari district public reception committee at Khagrachhari pourasabha conference hall.

— Star photo

New police investigation centre

LAXMIPUR, May 23: The newly built Bhaban of Hazirhat Police Investigation Centre covering six unions of Ramgati Thana here was formally inaugurated, reports UNB.

Muhammad Nazrul Islam, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Chittagong Range, opened the Bhaban on May 14. Faze Amin, ADC and district AL president and former MP AKM Shahjahan Kamal attended the function as special guests presided over by Police Super Muhammad Khairul Bahsar. Local political leaders and government officials also spoke on the occasion.

Another message said, a 37-member Laxmipur District Union Council Chairmen Association was formed in a meeting last week.

Health complex ailing

LAXMIPUR, May 23: The 31-bed Ramgati Thana Health Complex is beset with manifold problems depriving the patients of proper treatment, reports UNB.

At present, three physicians, out of nine, are working in the health complex. There are only three nurses, two of them have already got transfer order. The health complex lacks X-ray machine compelling the poor patients to go to the town for diagnosis. The only ambulance is lying abandoned under the open sky for a year due to lack of a driver creating numerous problems to the serious patients needed to be shifted to the Sadar thana hospital.

Extensive vegetables cultivation

MADARIPUR, May 23: The Agriculture Extension Department (AED) has taken up an extensive scheme to cultivate summer vegetables in the district in the current season, reports BSS.

A total of 2800 hectares has been brought under vegetables cultivation programme. The production target has been fixed at 35,000 tonnes. According to AED, Madaripur district office sources, the worst flood-hit farmers are now optimistic in achieving the target of vegetables production. AED has taken up special measures to ensure adequate supply of seeds, pesticides and fertilisers at fair prices.



NATORE: (Left) Despite prolonged drought and absence of rain for a longer period the farmers of Sherkol village in Singra thana have achieved a bumper production of high yielding variety of Boro paddy during this season. They harvested 30 to 40 maunds of paddy per bigha. (Right) Happy cultivators returning home with their produce in one afternoon.

— Star photo by Anwar Ali

Doctors helpless, patients suffer as terrorists dominate RMCH

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, May 23: The patients and working doctors of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) have become hostages in the hands of terrorists.

The terrorists have established a reign of terror both inside and outside the hospital. They also disturb the hospital employees, especially the doctors in different ways.

According to RMCH sources, the miscreants reside around the hospital. The surrounding areas are Laxmipur, Sepoypara, Hatem Khan, Kolabagan and Bilsimla.

They have also connections with various local and national groups.

occassion, throw abuses to them and even manhandle and injure them when denied. The senior doctors are also not spared.

The terrorists had attempted to murder eminent Paediatrician Prof Dr Abdul Rab and eminent kidney specialist, Associate Prof Habibur Rahman. They seriously beat medicine specialist Assistant Prof Tahur A K Mahamud for his denial to give them toll.

According to RMCH sources, at least 50 other doctors of different ranks have become victims of the terrorists' attacks in last 10 years. There are scores of doctors who have been

who actually run the hospital", said Dr Anif who has just completed the internship training. But there is none to look after them, he said.

"The situation has become so grave that we have to remain always alert to face attacks by the terrorists", said intern doctor Mahmud Mustafa in a pensive mood.

They alleged that there remained no senior doctor in the wards from noon to dawn when they had to manage everything.

Attendants of the patients do not consider shortage of manpower and inputs and get agitated when an odd situation is

Recently, the situation turned worse. "Neither the RMCH authorities, nor the police have shown any interest in maintaining security in the hospital. We cannot work in such an insecure environment where anybody comes under attack of terrorists any time," said Dr Mahmud Mustafa.

On April 29, Dr Sabuj, an on-duty intern doctor had been seriously stabbed. The intern doctors had gone on continued strike demanding arrest of the attackers. But police did not take any effective action.

Just two weeks after, another female intern doctor was seriously hit by the terrorists. The doctors were on strike again, but no positive action was taken.

At last the intern doctors went on movement for removal of the Director of the hospital for his alleged failure in main-

taining the security in the hospital. They also threatened mass resignation.

The senior doctors, however, did not want removal of the Director. "As a result, the intern and junior doctors got despaired," said Dr Mahmud adding further that they had virtually lost all interests in doing work in the hospital.

An Associate Professor, on condition of anonymity said that no senior doctor wanted to go or stay in Rajshahi for the prevailing situation.

There is only two professors in the hospital. Many posts of Associate Professor, Assistant Professor and Registrar have remained vacant for many days, sources said.

As a result, the standard of management and treatment of patients in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital is going down day by day, they observed.

Reinvestigation of Kanchan murder case after 12 yrs

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, May 23: CID police has started reinvestigation of the sensational Kanchan murder case after 12 years.

According to police, on May 14, 1987 at dead of night Mojabur Rahman Kanchan of village Basargati under Kandura union of Kendua thana was brutally killed.

The dead body was recovered a day after the incident from behind the house of Khurshed Ali of the same village.

A case was filed with Kendua Police Station in this connection by the victim's cousin named Hadis Mia.

Accordingly Kendua police submitted a chargesheet after the investigation. However, it has been alleged that some evidences were concealed. The Sessions Judge Court gave a judgement, but the complainants were not satisfied. They filed a criminal revision.

Boy killed while playing with bomb

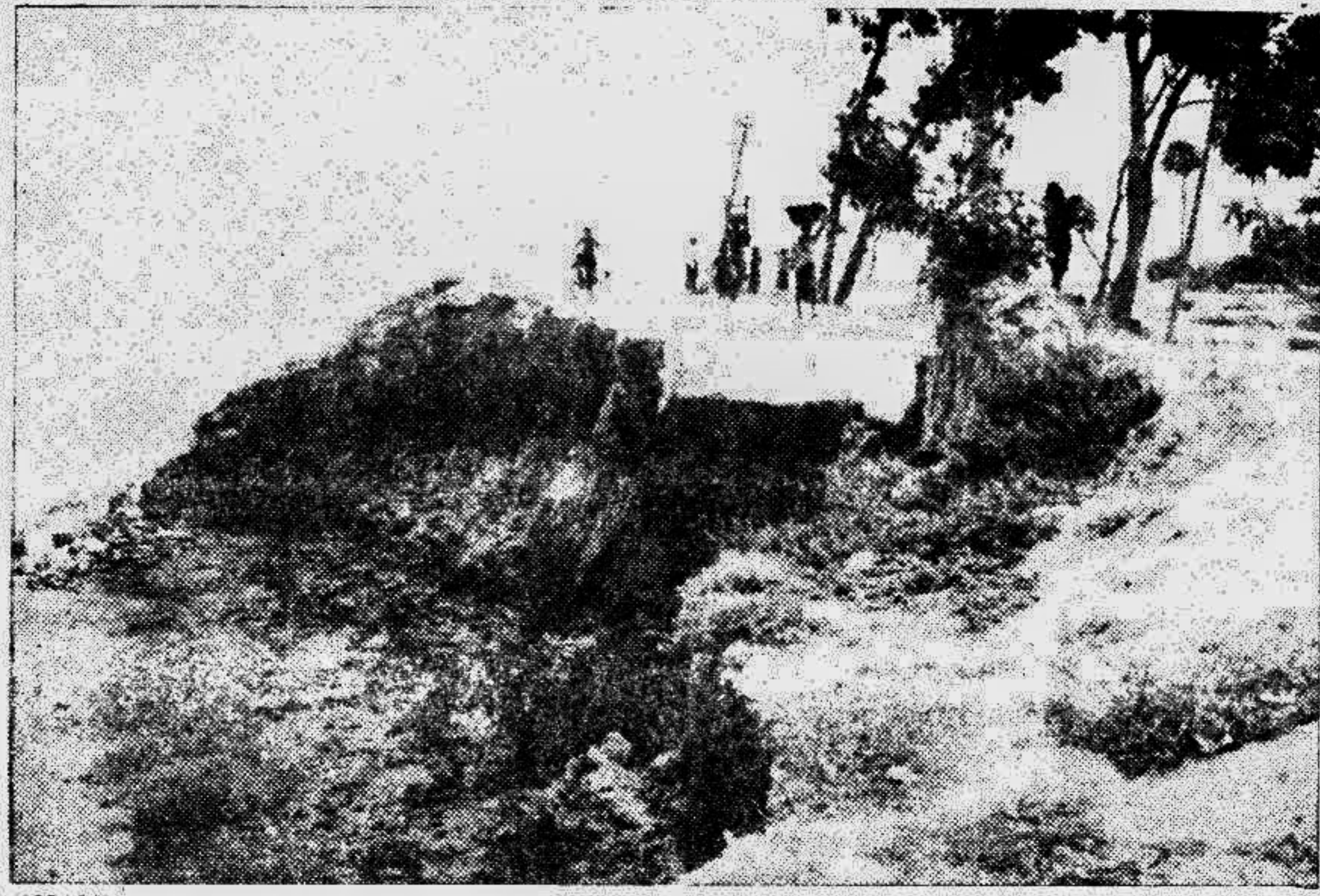
From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, May 23: One boy was killed and two other girls were seriously injured in a bomb blast on Thursday morning at Sherpara village in Godagari thana.

The dead was identified as Chamman aged seven years. He is the son of Deen Muhammad.

Seriously injured Lovely, 6, daughter of Ismail Hossain and Nazma, 11, were admitted into Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Family sources of the victims said that the children were playing with the abandoned bomb as a cricket ball. Chamman died on the spot. No case was filed yet in this connection.



CHANDPUR: Unabated erosion of the river Meghna in Haimchar thana area. — Star photo

4 dacoits held: Firearms seized

CHITTAGONG, May 23: Detective police arrested four dacoits and seized five firearms after an encounter with them in the city's Doublemooring Thana early Sunday, reports UNB.

Hijacked microbus seiged: Two armed dacoits arrested

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA, May 23: Two armed dacoits were arrested by Chalmohar police from Natunbazar area of Chalmohar bazaar on Pabna-Faridpur road on Saturday night.

They were arrested with a hijacked microbus. Two other dacoits, however, managed to escape.

According to police, a group of four dacoits, identifying themselves as passengers, hired the microbus from a Rent-a-Car shop of Joydebpur in Dhaka for going to Shahzadpur in Sirajganj district on Friday night.

Shahzadpur was not known to the driver. Taking this advantage, the group of dacoits directed the driver to drive the vehicle through a road leading to Faridpur in Pabna district.

When the vehicle reached near the sluice gate at Demra suddenly the dacoits tied the hands and feet of the driver and threw him away after a good beating. Then the dacoits drove the vehicle towards Pabna via Bhangaora and Chalmohar.

Meanwhile, a night coach reached near the sluice gate where the driver and other passengers found the injured driver there. They took him in the coach and handed him over to the police in Faridpur thana. Then police heard the story of the hijacking of the microbus from the driver. They recorded a case and sent urgent wireless messages to all the thanas of Pabna district.

On receiving the message, Chatmohar police took position near Natunbazar and created barricade on the road. As soon as the microbus arrived there, police challenged the hijackers and surrounded the microbus.

Police conducted search operation and arrested two dacoits, while two others fled away through windows of the microbus. They seized the microbus.

Police also seized one country-made revolver, one airgun and a big, sharp dagger.

Names of the two arrested dacoits are Shaheen, son of Lutfar Molla of village Kaida and Abdul Karim, son of Arzan Sardar of village Kamargram, both under Pabna sadar thana.

Daudkandi Thana Aurickshaw Owners' Office opens

By Staff Correspondent

Veteran freedom fighter Maj Gen (Retd) Mohammad Subed Ali Bhuiyan has said the security of life, property and dignity of people are threatened now a days due to serious deterioration of law and order situation throughout the country is deteriorating day by day. Now there is no guarantee of life and property of commonman. Similarly the dignity of people are being neglected," he said.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of Daudkandi thana aurickshaw owners' office on Sunday, General Bhuiyan said development, advancement, stability and peace in society are also being seriously affected due to deterioration of law and order.

He called upon the local people to come forward and assist the law enforcing agencies to improve law and order situation. The retired General stressed the need for peace and discipline as well as honesty for ensuring development in the society.

Presided over by former chairman Rafiqul Islam, it was addressed, among others, by local TNO Pirzada Shahidul Harun, aurickshaw samity president Abdul Baten, Jashimuddin Dulal and student leader Monir Hossain.

Earlier, General MSA Bhuiyan was taken to the meeting venue in a ceremonial motorcade and was presented with flower bouquet. He also planted a sapling at the office premises.

Gopalgram mosque needs to be renovated

From A Correspondent

MAGURA, May 23: The historical Gopalgram mosque which was constructed 350 years ago is going to be ruined for want of renovation and proper maintenance.

It is situated at Gopalgram village of Shalikha thana, 25 km away from the district town. During the reign of emperor Akbar this mosque was built with the financial help of holy men Zamiruddin of Katali village and Bara Shikder of Gopalgram.

Now the mosque is being decayed due to its old age. But the artistic design of the mosque still draws the attention of people from home and abroad.

Four minars which are 50ft in height, domed roof, square shape (60ftx60ft) are the specialities of the mosque. Inside the mosque, there are some marble designs which creates a solemn environment for the



Gopalgram mosque

people who still come here to offer prayers.

The local elite have demanded immediate renovation and proper maintenance of the mosque.

Production of litchi falls in greater Dinajpur dist

PANCHAGARH, May 23: The production of litchi in greater Dinajpur during the current season would be much less than that of the previous years, alerted the growers, reports UNB.

The growers said they expect only 40 per cent production in the current season.

The cause of the less production was attributed to the drought-like situation now prevailing and more rain during September-October period last year.

The growers said excessive rains in the last year caused addition of more carbohydrate in the soil, which did not help the litchi production.

On the other hand, lack of rainfall in the current season damaged the rest of the production inflicting heavy loss to them.

Officials of Agriculture Extension Department said in Dinajpur region a total of 177 hectares of land were brought under cultivation of the fruit during the current season.

But many trees of the region are now standing without any fruit.

From a normal tree, the farmers used to reap 22,000 to 25,000 litchis during the season. But this year the production has come down to only 3,000 to 4,000.

The officials said the production target of litchi in greater Dinajpur including Panchagarh was on average 1,600 tons per year. But this year the production would be around 250 tons only.

The highest number of groves is located in Madhabnati area of Biral thana of Dinajpur district. This year, production is also low in the area.

There is a high demand of quality litchi of this area across the country, they said adding that this year there might be a huge supply shortfall of the fruit.

New executives of Faridpur unit of Govt College Shikhhak Parishad

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, May 23: A 25-member executive committee of the district unit of Bangladesh Government College Shikhhak Parishad was elected for the next term with ATM Shamsur Rahman, Md Abdur Rob and Abdur Rashid Mulk as its President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The conference and election was held at Government Rajendra College here recently. Principal Ali Akbar Khan Dalar, President of the Parishad attended the conference as chief guest, while Md Shahjahan, Secretary General of the parishad was the special guest on the occasion.

Md Abdur Rob presided over the function.

In the conference the teachers expressed their solidarity with their 11 points demands which included introduction of regular promotion, fixation of retiring age at 60 and declaration of education department as non-vacation.

Some businessmen said, "If the rivers are not dredged regularly innumerable mills and factories will be closed" adding "a good number of families, including those who live on cultivation and fishing, will also be unemployed."

Water level in all 16 rivers falls in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, May 23: Water level in all the 16 rivers of the district has fallen sharply during the current dry season disrupting irrigation and river transportation, reports UNB.

Accumulation of silts and inadequate dredging are the causes behind filling up of the rivers, said the river experts.

Some 75 km of river-ways out of 132 km of the district have been dried up fully while sharp fall in water levels in the remaining ways has made river transportation risky.

There are some 16 rivers in the district comprising 132 kms river-ways of which 57 km of mighty Meghna, Shitalakhya, Aralkha, Paharia, Haridhoa, Old Brahmaputra, Kalagachiya and Kaor are somehow navigable.

The farmers occupy the remaining 75km river-ways that dry up fully for cultivation during the lean season. They cultivate rice, wheat, groundnut, potato and vegetables in the dried up riverbeds.

Meanwhile, the navigable river ways are being filled with

silts resulting in the emergence of innumerable shoals.

Once mighty Shitalakhya has become a dead river now. Water level in the river has come down to four to five meters in some places from Lakhpur to Ghorasal.

As a result, river transportation is being disrupted seriously. River transporters have to depend on tidal flow due to the problem.

Industrialists have to spend additional expenses (three to four times more) for transportation of raw materials.

Some 200 mills and factories situated on both sides of the river from Charsindur to Narayanganj are on the verge of closure as they are not getting raw materials timely due to the transportation problem.