

## News snaps

### Attack on cattle traders

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, June 23: A group of cattle traders came under attack of local terrorists at Tepakhola cattle market here recently.

Police rushed to the spot but the terrorists fled the scene blasting several bombs. Police also fired three rounds of blank shots and later on arrested Jhulan on charge of his alleged involvement in the incident.

### Youth commits suicide

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, June 23: A young man of village Refayetpur in the sadar thana committed suicide recently taking pesticide after being lost in gambling.

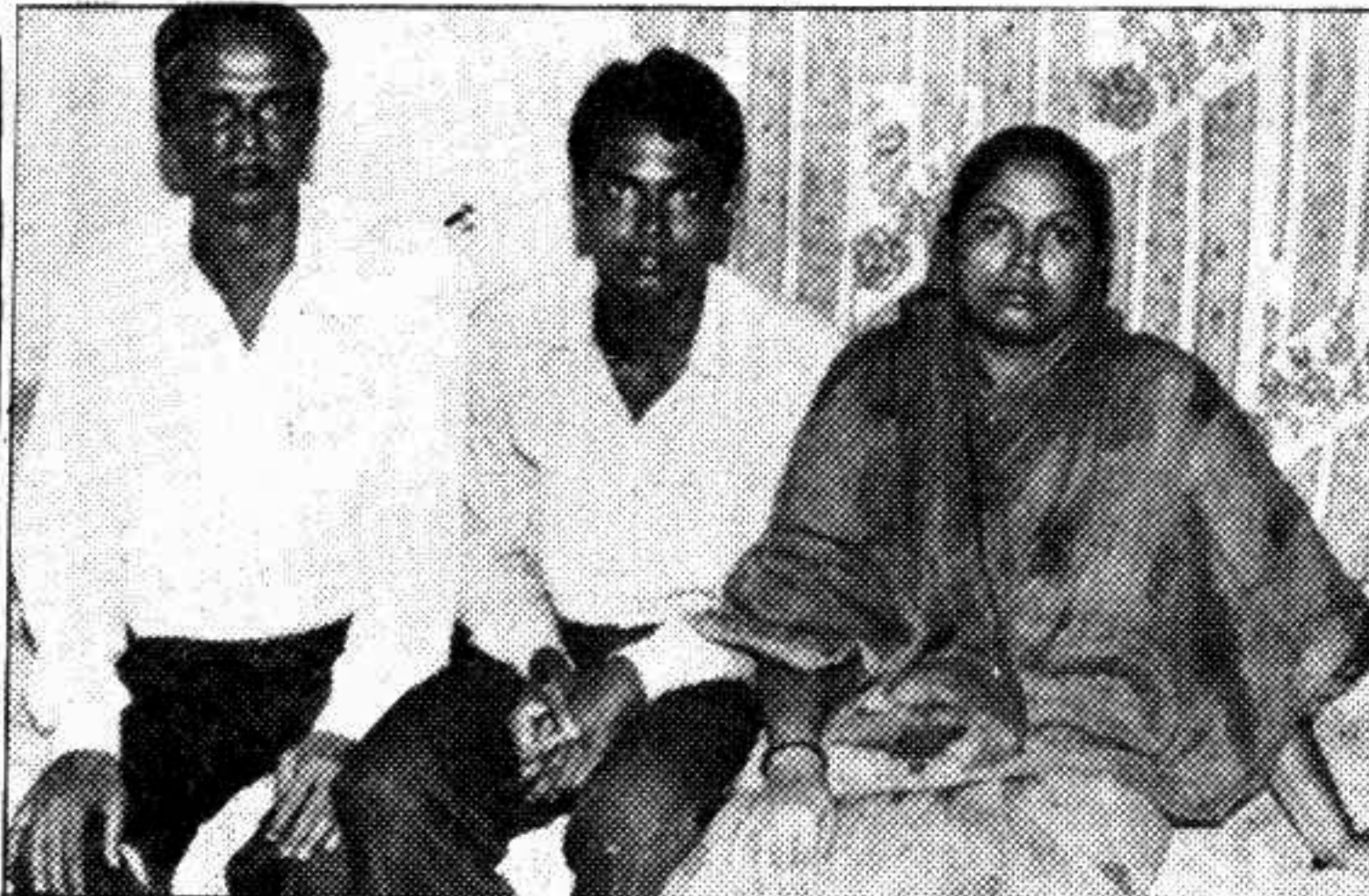
Poor Ranju 21, of the village went out of his house with Takā 40 for shopping. On way instead of going to market he was engaged in gambling in a nearby centre. Subsequently he lost his money. He returned disappointed and finally decided to end his life by taking pesticide. He was immediately rushed to Gaibandha Hospital where he died on the next day.

### Smuggled Indian sugar seized

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, June 23: Mohespur police recovered 113 bags of smuggled Indian sugar and 10 bags of onion from a Jibannagar bound passenger bus on Friday evening, according to police sources.

Police said, they searched the bus which started from Shyamkur in the same thana. None was arrested so far.



SYLHET: ASM Najmul Haque (Shimul) who stood first in the combined merit list of Humanities group from Comilla Board seen with his parents-- Md Azizul Haque and Shirin Akhtar. — Star photo

### Another girl commits suicide

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, June 23: One 18-year-old girl has ended her life recently by taking poison at village Kumarpur in Pakundia thana.

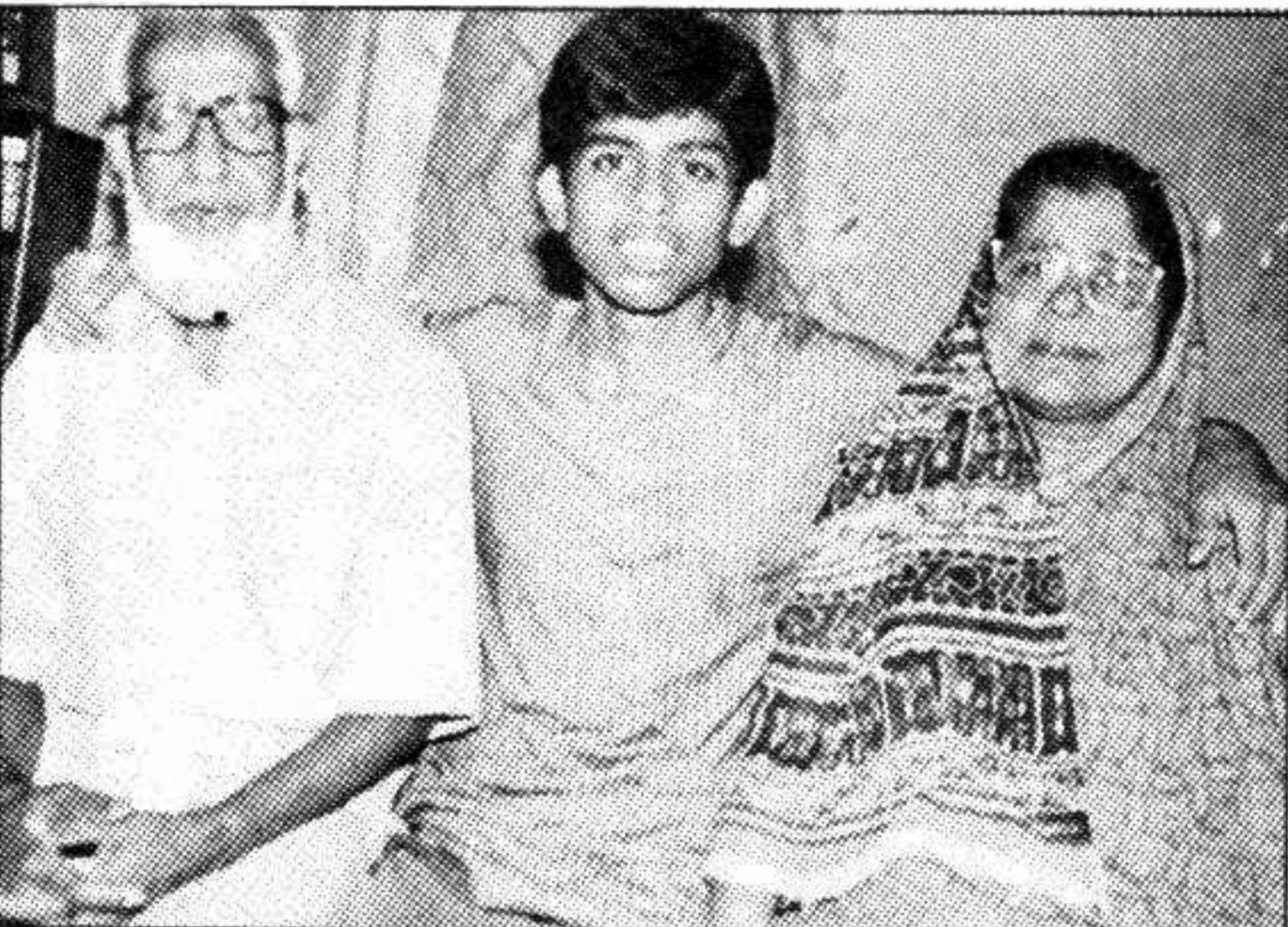
Nur Nahar Begum, daughter of Azabuddin swallowed poison following which she was admitted into Pakundia Hospital where she died later on. The victim appeared in the last SSC examination, but could not come out successful, police sources and relatives said.

### Discussion meeting

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 23: A discussion meeting on 'Role of Poura Mohila Commissioners' was held recently at the local Public Hall auditorium.

Mirza Shakhawat Hossain Moni chairman of Jamalpur Pourashava was in the chair. The speakers at the meeting said after being elected commissioners from the reserve seats they were treated as rubber stamp commissioners. As a woman prime minister Sheikh Hasina assured to realise the rights of women, but now they are deprived of work. They urged the government to enhance their remunerations, ensure equal rights with male commissioners. A good number of women commissioners from greater Mymensingh region took part there.



SYLHET: Syed Abdul Moin of Sylhet Government Pilot High School stood 13th in the combined merit list of the Science group from Comilla Board this year seen with his parents. — Star photo

### Erratic power makes life miserable

GOLAPGANJ, June 23: Erratic power supply here seriously hit the subscribers hampering normal activities in daily life, reports UNB.

Local residents complained that power goes off for at least five to six hours daily. Particularly the children and aged people are worst-hit in the prevailing sultry weather. The condition of patients in the hospital are beyond description, said the sources adding that a generator, given by the government, is yet to be installed. In many cases, emergency operation can not be performed due to power failure threatening the lives of patients. Many small mills and factories are on the verge of closer due to the power problem. Small traders are the worst-hit and the students are also hit badly.

### Donation for cricket team's victory

KISHOREGANJ, June 23: All police officers of the district have decided to donate their one-day salary to Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) for the historic and glorious victory of Bangladesh in World Cup Cricket '99 over Pakistan team, reports BSS.

### Viral fever in Madaripur

MADARIPUR, June 23: Outbreak of viral fever has caused health hazards in the district. A large number of inhabitants of the district has been suffering from this fever, reports BSS.

High fever with cough, cold and headache are the symptoms of this fever which lasts upto one week. The doctors requested the people not to be panicky. They advised the persons suffering from the fever to take rest and Medicines, according to Doctor's prescription.

### 960 crimes recorded in '98

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 23: Some 960 crimes were officially recorded in the district last year marking the deterioration of law and order situation.

According to police, the crimes included rape, dacoity, hijacking, clash, kidnapping, incident of acid throwing and women, child repression and murder. But the local people claimed that the actual number is much higher than the crimes recorded with police stations.

### Uplift projects progressing

GAZIPUR, June 23: Gazipur Pourasabha has been implementing 263 development projects at an allocation of Taka 1,57,82,000 in the current fiscal year, reports BSS. A pourasabha source said, 163 projects are being implemented at a cost of Taka 1,25,82,300 from the own resource of the municipality.

## British team visits Banaripara

BARISAL, June 23: A two-member British team led by Frank Junkings, Education field officer of Development Funding International Department (DFID) of the British High Commission visited the Reflect Education programme of Bangladesh Development Society (BDS), a local non-government organisation, at Banaripara last week, reports BSS.

They exchanged views with the BDS officers and teachers and students of the Reflect Education Programme Centre at village Shakaria under Salia-Bakpur of Banaripara thana.

Coordinator Serajud Dahi, BDS Deputy director James Premananda Biswas and BDS Area Manager ATM Mostafa, among others, were present on the occasion.

## Shimul wants to join army

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, June 23: ASM Najmul Haque (Shimul) wishes to join the Army. A student of Sylhet Cadet College-- Shimul who stood first in the combined merit list of the Humanities group in the SSC examinations from Comilla Board said that he was happy enough with his result. He got a total of 878 marks alongwith letter marks in seven subjects.

Shimul is the eldest among three sons and a daughter of Md Azizul Haque, Office Assistant of Sylhet Cadet College and Shirin Akhtar.

While talking to The Daily Star at his residence at Sylhet Cadet College staff quarters, Shimul said, I was confident of securing any of the first three positions. He used to study for seven to eight hours daily before his examinations. He had no private tutor. He is grateful to his parents as well as to the teachers for the result.

A fan of Ronaldo as well as of Brazil, Shimul regularly plays in the college football and volleyball teams. The existing system of politics in the country has annoyed him much. Reading books and collecting stamps is his hobby.



A typical tri-wheeler which is locally called 'Helicopter' is now widely on move along the rural roads of the northern region. The vehicle is operated by shallow tubewell machine. Such tri-wheeler has eased to a great extent the problem of people's movement and carrying goods from place to place. — Star photo by A K M Mohsin

# New paddy procurement target a blow to Jamalpur farmers

From Our correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 23: As paddy growers in the district are not getting fair prices of their products the farmers are resorting to ancient barter system, replacing money as the mode for exchanging goods.

Farmers have attributed the situation to inadequate government intervention in procuring paddy at government fixed prices during the current paddy season, which has witnessed a bumper production, and activities of middlemen with crop markets.

The system has been put into practice in Jamalpur sadar,

Sarisabari, Islampur, Malendab, Madarganj, Bakshiganj and Dewanganj of the district.

Farmers in these areas are procuring a liter of kerosine in exchange for 5 to 6 kg of paddy and one bag TSP fertiliser, which costs Tk 450, in exchange for about three mounds of paddy, witnesses said.

The government has set a target to procure only 2 lakh tons of paddy from the district in the current season against the last year's target of 3.50 lakh tons. Moreover, price this year has also been revised downward from Tk 250 per

maund to Tk 215 under the current paddy procurement drive.

The decision came as a blow to the district's farmers at a time when the government has withdrawn almost all the subsidies from agriculture inputs, said local growers.

As fertiliser prices have been on the increase because of withdrawal of subsidy and absence of fair prices of the products experts apprehend drastic fall in the output of HYV paddy in the next season.

Abdul Karim, a paddy grower of village Binander para under Jamalpur sadar thana, said he

had earmarked only 10 bighas of land for cultivation of HYV paddy for next season against 30 bighas last season.

Farmers in the village told this correspondent that they had already decided to reduce high yielding variety paddy farming, popularly known as Irri, in the next season.

Farmers said total expenditure, including labour, fertilisers and irrigation costs, for growing per maund of paddy is about Tk 280 while the current market price of rice is Tk 230 to Tk 240 per maund.

## A brilliant result by Pabna boys

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA, June 23: School boys of this district have scored an extra-ordinarily brilliant result in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination under the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Rajshahi, this year.

As many as 30 boys and girls from different educational institutions of the district have been placed in the merit list in different groups. There are also some rural educational institutions which earn the glory of good result.

Of these 30 meritorious students, 22 are from Pabna Cadet College. From Pabna Zilla School four examinees obtained places in the merit list of the board. Besides, one female examinee from Pabna Government Girls' High School, one from Santhia Pilot High School, one from Dulai High School and another from Surjanagar Pilot High School scored brilliant results.

In the General Science group, 11 examinees of Pabna Cadet College stood first, second, third, fourth, seventh, eighth, eleventh, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and twentieth places.

They are: Mohammad Golam Mustafa Bhuiyan who stood first obtaining 945 marks in the aggregate; Mohammad Faisal Bin Selim Khan stood second with 938 marks; Mohammad Anwarul Islam stood 3rd with 935 marks; Mohammad Raihan Masood stood fourth with 932 marks; Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman stood seventh with 929 marks; Mohammad Shakil Adnan stood eighth place with 928 marks; Mohammad Afzal Hossain stood 11th place securing 924 marks; Md Mizanur Rahman stood 13th with 922 marks; Moynuddin Iqbal and Golam Mahfuz Khan jointly stood 14th securing 921 marks each; Mohammad Golam Sarwar stood 15th with 920 marks and Saifullah Siddiqui stood 20th with 913 marks in the aggregate.

In the Social Science group from Pabna Cadet College the first position was secured by Mohammad Mashial Alam with 878 marks; Abdullah Al Miran stood third with 864 marks; Mohammad Mabashi

wirul Ibad stood seventh with 843 marks; Mohammad Mehedi Hasan Bin Ghani stood ninth with 841 marks; Mohammad Noman Ferdous and Mohammad Saiedul Islam jointly stood eleventh, both securing 836 marks; Mohammad Mukhtadir Islam and Mohammad Saiduzzaman Akhand also jointly stood 16th with 825 marks each; Mohammad Khaled Noman stood 18th with 823 marks and Mohammad Saiful Islam obtained 19th place in the merit list securing 822 marks in the aggregate.

From Pabna Cadet College a total of 42 candidates appeared in the SSC examination this year from the General Science group. A total of 10 candidates appeared in the Social Science group. All of them passed honourably and all have been placed in the first division and everyone secured letter marks in many subjects.

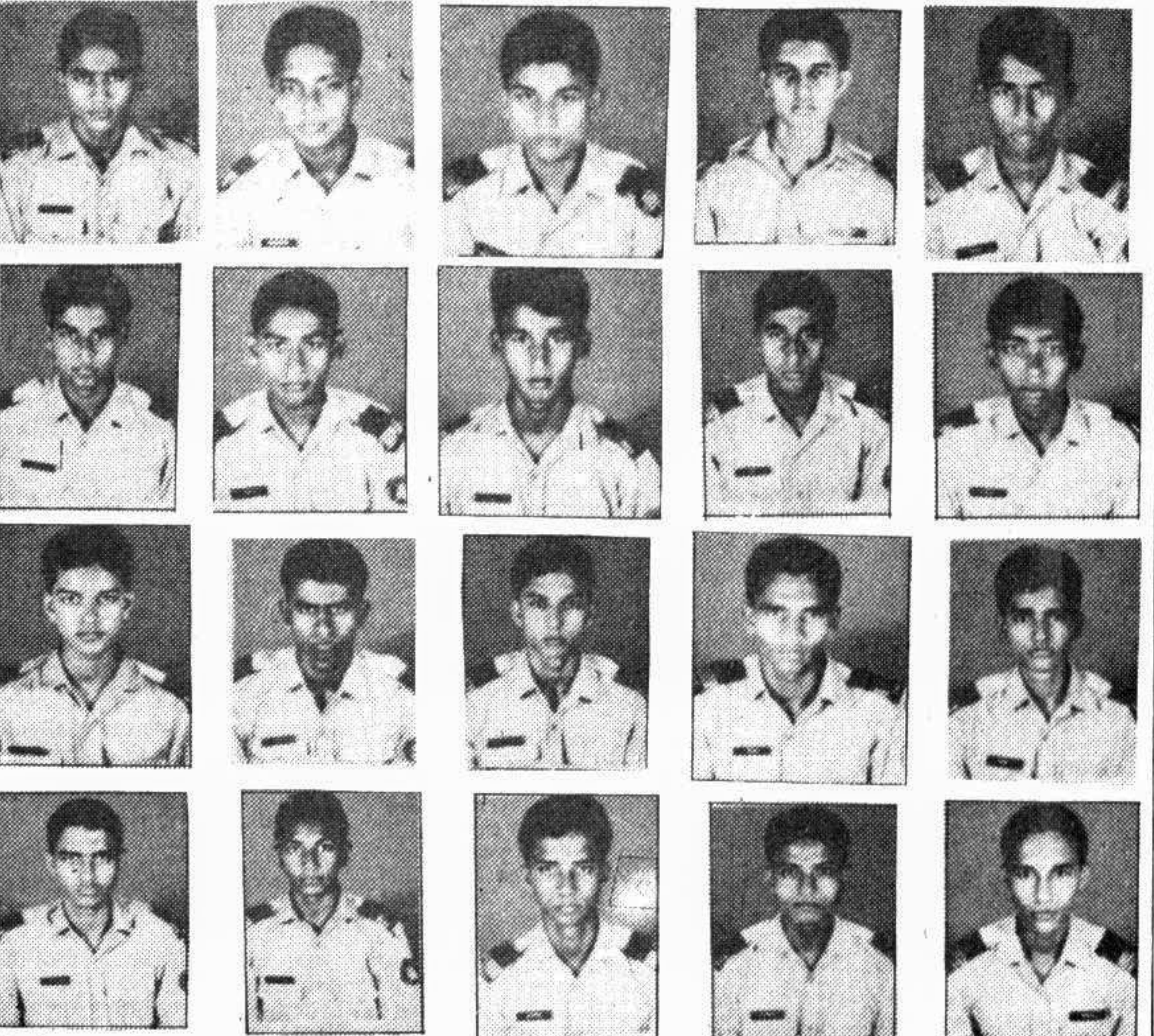
From Pabna Zilla School, three examinees secured their places in the merit list in the General Science group while one in the Social Science group. Kazi Mohammad Kamal ibne Aziz stood 17th with 916

marks.

Besides, Shahriar Mamun of RCN-BSN High School of Chhatmohar stood 14th securing 921 marks.

In the Commerce group, Mohammad Ashraf Alam of Dular High School stood fourth securing 812 marks and S M Mahbubul Alam of Santhia Pilot High School secured 12th place in the Social Science group obtaining 786 marks in the aggregate.

In the Commerce group Aslamuddin of Surjanagar Pilot High School obtained 12th place in the merit list.



(Left to right) 1st row: Mustafa, Faisal, Arman, Raihan, Mahbub (2nd row) Adnan, Afzal, Mizan, Moin, Mahfuz (3rd row) Sarwar, Saifullah, Moshui, Abdullah, Ibad (4th row) Mehedi, Noman, Sayeed, Mukhtadir and Saiduzzaman. — Star photo

## Unabated fishing of 'jatka' in Jhalakati

JHALAKATI, June 23: 'Rupai Biplab' launched by the government to increase fish production and save fish fry has not made much headway in the district as elsewhere in the country, reports UNB.

Reason: Unabated fishing of fry, specially 'jatka' (hilsa fry). Fishing of 'jatka' and other fry from rivers is strictly prohibited for safe breeding to increase production of fish, the main source of protein. But unscrupulous fishermen are openly engaged in such illegal fishing using current nets.

As per the Fish Resources Preservation Act of 1950, anyone fishing or trading fry below nine inches are liable to be punished with two years' imprisonment or a fine of Tk 500 or both.

It is alleged that middlemen trade fry openly violating the law, but no action is taken against them by the concerned officials for reasons unknown. Production of many local varieties of fish is gradually declining in the region. Tengra, puti, pabda, khalse, chela, shing, magur and koi have almost vanished from the market giving an abnormal rise to prices, said a fish trader here.

According to the District Fisheries Department, annual fish production in the district is about 6,500 metric tons against the demand of some 9,000 tons.

The government imposed ban in fiscal 1986-87 on the import of current net from Thailand and other countries to save the country's fish resources. But current net is being smuggled into the country from India.

There were some half-hearted attempts by the authorities to bring the violators to book, but without much success.

The district administration and the local Fisheries Department, in separate drives, in Sadar and Nalchhiti thanas, seized seven current nets worth Tk 70,000 from the Sugandha river on Saturday (June 19).

## Hard days for 3,000 kolus of Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, June 23: Over 3,000 'kolus' (oilmen) in 13 thanas have been facing hardship to run their bullock-driven 'ghanis' (expellers for edible oil) for lack of adequate funding, reports UNB.

Many such indigenous oil producers were forced to close their mills and turned unemployed. About 1,800 bullock-driven oil expellers used to provide for some 12,000 families here.

There has been a steady decline in the number of such indigenous oil mills as more efficient and cheaper mechanised oil mills are being set up in various parts, including the thana headquarters of Katiadi, Hossainpur, Pakundia, Mithamoin, Itna, Kuliachar,

Bajitpur, Bhairab, Tarail, Karimganj, Austagram, Nikli and Sadar.

The demand for edible oil produced by 'ghani', once a must for every household, is on the wane with cheaper, imported soybean and palm oil flooding the local markets.

According to sources, Tk 8,000 is needed to operate a bullock-driven 'ghani', but the poor oilmen cannot manage this amount for their own resources.

Some of them are running their 'ghani' taking loan at exorbitant rate of interest from local moneylenders. This raises their cost of production and many were forced to stop operating their 'ghani'.

## Telephone subscribers' sufferings increase

MOULVIBAZAR, June 23: Telephone subscribers often suffer due to various problems and shortcomings of the telephone exchanges here, reports UNB.

According to T&T sources, there are 10 telephone exchanges in the district, including the digital exchange at the district headquarter.

Besides, there are analog, CB system and magneto exchanges in the thana headquarters and other important places of the district.

Telephone subscribers suffer mainly due to inadequate maintenance and staff. They alleged negligence and widespread corruption.

Ten card phone booths were installed at different places for providing better telecommunication service to the people, but at present only four are in operation. The other six has gone out of order.

Almost all the exchanges are

running with less than the required number of operators. At the district headquarters, with 1,500 subscribers (digital), there are only 13 posts of operators. Of them, only 10 are now working.

There are 350 subscribers in Srimangal exchange. Only eight operators are working at the exchange. Recently, the exchange has been expanded with additional 400 lines. Work of the new lines was completed about 10 months ago, but these are yet to be formally inaugurated.

The number of subscribers at Kulara exchange is 351. Only three of the seven operators are presently working at the exchange. The board at Kulara exchange is too old to bear the burden of the increasing number of subscribers.

Besides, Baralekka exchange has 200 subscribers, Rajanagar exchange 150 and Kamalganj exchange 75.



BRAHMANBARIA: A folk cultural festival in progress which was held here recently. — Star photo

## Faridpur-Sadarpur road in bad shape

From Abdul Matin Fakir

FARIDPUR, June 23: Faridpur-Sadarpur road via Char Bhadrans is in deplorable condition.

Cracks and potholes have developed at many points of the narrow road. Two vehicles cannot ply side by side at a time through this road.

Passengers have alleged overloading and reckless driving cause frequent road accidents in this route. Passengers suffer a lot due to lack of basic amenities.

Most of the buses plying along the road are dilapidated. They always try to pick up passengers without considering the capacity of the buses. Sometimes, passengers are seen travelling on the roof-top of buses. The buses usually arrive and depart late and ply at the maximum speed. As a consequence road accidents occur. Sometimes, the buses go out of order on way causing untold suffering to the passengers particularly women and children.

The conductors and helpers are often rude to the passengers.

A bridge on the road near Monikutha bazaar in Sadarpur thana is in a dilapidated condition. The bridge may collapse at any moment causing casualty to passengers.

It is also alleged that just

before and after any festival, the buses collect excessive fare from the passengers causing untoward incidents.

### In Netrakona

LP gas on sale at Tk 1,200 per cylinder

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, June 23: Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is being sold at Taka 1,000 to 1,200 per cylinder here against its official price of Taka 260 each cylinder.

LP gas is not available in the supply depots of Padma, Jamuna and Meghna oil companies here, company sources disclosed.

The three companies used to supply over one lakh LP gas cylinders to the dealers here every month.

Taking advantage of the crisis now, some unscrupulous dealers are making their fortune by realising prices many times higher than the fixed price, consumers said.