

News snaps

578 post of physicians vacant

NAOGAON, Sept 17: Some 578 posts of physicians have long been lying vacant in different hospitals and health complexes in 16 northern districts, leaving the rural people on the mercy of high-charging private practitioners, reports UNB.

Of the vacant posts, 13 are of senior consultants, five of junior consultants, 471 of medical officers and 89 of dental surgeons. Officials sources said there are 1581 posts of physicians in 586 hospitals, thana health complexes and sub-health centres in the region. A good number of posts of nurse, paramedic, office assistants are also lying vacant in the hospitals, they said.

Fishing in Kaptai Lake begins

RANGAMATI, Sept 17: After a break of 90 days, fishing in the Kaptai Lake began on specific conditions from Wednesday, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation has given the permissions. The department said fishing is allowed within two-km area in front of the Fishery Ghat on strict adherence of existing rules. Prohibition of fishing continues in fish fry areas. Angling at the Kaptai Lake was suspended for 90 days on June 12 with a view to raising fish production in the lake.

Loan for youths

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Sept 17: The Youth Development Centre here has disbursed Taka 52 lakh seven thousand as loan among 530 youths, reports BSS.

The Youth Development Centre has been imparting training to the youths on various subjects like type writing, sewing and short hand. At present 700 youths are getting training from the centre. The Deputy Director of the development centre told that Taka 4.74,000 was distributed on National Mourning Day among the selected youths. The recovery position of the arrear loan is satisfactory, the Deputy Director added.

Workshop on Human Rights

JHALAKATI, Sept 17: A daylong workshop on Human Rights and legal education for local community leaders was held here on Monday, reports UNB.

A total of 40 opinion leaders, including imam, kazi, teachers and public representatives, took part in the workshop. The workshop mainly focussed on problems of early marriage, marriage registration, polygamy, divorce, subsistence allowance for wives and children, *denmohor*, dowry, acid attack and rape.

Stolen motor cycle recovered

SATKHIRA, Sept 17: Kalaroa thana police recovered one stolen motor cycle from a house at village Kochmara under Kalaroa thana on Friday, reports BSS.

Police arrested three persons in this connection. Police sources said, acting on a tip-off Kalaroa thana police raided the house of Moslem Gazi of village Kochmara and recovered one stolen motor cycle. Police arrested Zahidul Islam, 24, Abul Bashar, 26, of Keshabpur thana and Ebrahim, 30, of Kalaroa thana from the house.

Work progressing

MADARIPUR, Sept 17: Work for the installation of a 1200 line digital telephone exchange here is progressing satisfactorily, reports BSS.

The local Telegraph and Telephone (T&T) sources said, 90 per cent work of the switch room including installation of the main distribution fan, air conditioner, computers and battery has already been completed.

18 uplift schemes undertaken

JHALAKATI, Sept 17: The government has undertaken 18 development schemes in the district under the "Rural Project" during the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is implementing the schemes at a cost of Tk 2.85 crore. These are: Construction of 14 rural roads and four growth centres in Sadar, Rajapur, Nalchiti and Kathalia thanas.

Two alleged dacoits arrested

TANGAIL, Sept 17: Police arrested two alleged dacoits on September 8, reports BSS.

They were identified as Syed Ali, 30, and Abu Hanif, 28, of Madhupur hilly areas. Police said, the arrested dacoits were absconders. There are 30 cases against Sayed and 14 cases against Hanif in Madhupur thana, mostly for dacoity and wood stealing.



Nazrul Parisad, Comilla arranged a cultural function in the district town on the occasion of the 23rd death anniversary of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Housewife killed by husband

JESSORE, Sept 17: A housewife was allegedly strangled to death by her husband at Dighirpar village in Sharsha thana on Monday evening for failing to meet the demand of dowry, reports UNB.

Family and police sources said Fulbanu, 30, got married with Azizul Haq of the same village 10 years ago paying him some dowry. Soon after the marriage, Azizul started demanding more money as dowry and often tortured his wife. Recently, he demanded Tk 20,000 but the poor father of the victim refused to pay. On Monday, he tortured Fulbanu severely and went into hiding after strangled her to death. Police sent the body to Sadar Hospital on Tuesday evening for autopsy.

70 uplift projects implemented

KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 17: The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) implemented 70 development projects in Dighinala thana in the 1998-1999 fiscal year, reports UNB.

According to an official source, the government sanctioned Taka 1,52,25,000 for execution of the projects in agriculture, irrigation, infrastructure development, education, public health and communication sectors. Of the total, 22 projects were implemented at a cost of Taka 6.51 lakh in agriculture sector, 29 projects at a cost of Taka 14.28 lakh in transport and communication sector, 12 projects at a cost of Taka 4.82 lakh in infrastructure development sector and five projects were implemented at an allocation of Taka 2.59 lakh in education sector. Eight primary schools were reconstructed at a cost of Taka 40 lakh in the thana in the last fiscal.

Body recovered

MANIKGANJ, Sept 17: Police recovered the body of a young man from a water-filled ditch behind the Women's College hotel in the town on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said on information from local people, they recovered the body of Hafezuddin, 20, of Gangadhar patti area, from the ditch. They said the body bore a number of severe cut marks. Family sources said Hafezuddin had been missing since Monday morning after he went out of the house to catch fish. Father of the deceased, Hamezuddin, filed a case with Sadar Police. The body was sent to Sadar hospital for autopsy.

More rural post offices soon

KHULNA, Sept 17: The postal department will construct seven rural post office buildings in seven thanas of six districts of the southern region in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the government sanctioned Taka 18.50 lakh for construction of the post offices. The post office buildings will be constructed at Paikgacha thana of Khulna district, Monirampur and Sarsa thana of JESSORE district, Sadar thana of Narail district, Mathbaria thana of Pirojpur district, Shalika thana of Magura district and Boalmari thana of Faridpur district. Construction work of the building will begin in the current month.

Workshop at Srimangal

USAID granted \$ 600m in fisheries, agri sectors since '71

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, Sept 17: The USAID has so far granted 600 million US dollar for the development of agriculture and fisheries sector in Bangladesh since 1971.

Gordon H West, Director of USAID Mission in Bangladesh said this while speaking at a day long workshop held at Srimangal in Moulvibazar district Friday last.

The session of the workshop on USAID-aided project, Management of Aquatic Ecosystem through Community Husbandry (MACH) was presided over by the Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar, GKM Nurul Amin. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Land, MA Gani, who is also the Vice-President of the national-level committee of the project, was present as the chief guest, while team leader of the project, William J Collis delivered the introductory speech.

The USAID Mission chief said fish is traditionally the major source of protein for poor people of Bangladesh. It provides about 70 per cent of animal protein. Showing some statistics, he said approximately 13 million people of Bangladesh are engaged in fishing and fisheries-related activities, and majority (11 million)

of them are seasonal and subsistence fishermen. They rely on open water for income in the last 20 years.

The decline in the inland fisheries and floodplain catch is estimated to have been between 40 to 60 per cent, while at the same time, the population has increased by 42 per cent. The continuing decline in fish catch is caused by overfishing, increased agricultural usage of dry season water, obstruction of fish migration patterns by flood control structures and roads and habitat degradation due to pollution pressure, West observed. He said that, it is important to try to reverse this trend because of the vital role of fishing. It helps improve the incomes and nutrition of the landless poor in Bangladesh.

The Mission Chief informed the Management of Aquatic Ecosystem through Community Husbandry (MACH) was initiated in 1998 with a grant from Winrock International (an NGO of USA). Winrock is working with three subgrantees, the US private voluntary organisation, CARITAS and two Bangladeshi NGOs-CNRS (Centre for Natural Resources) and BCAS (Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies) in collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries and

Livestock and the Ministry of Land.

The 53 million dollar US project has been working initially in two areas—one south of Sylhet and the other west of Dhaka which have approximately 15,000 hectares of open water where about 2,000 families earn their living directly from fishing. The project activities include, raising awareness among fishermen about the need to improve the habitat including promoting plant and animal diversity, promoting equitable access by local populations to the natural resources of the floodplain, promoting co-management of floodplain resources by communities and local government and identifying activities to generate alternative income (caged fishing).

It is estimated that, the fish catch will increase by 30 per cent at the pilot sites. Per capita fish consumption will increase by 15 to 20 per cent and alternative income will go up by 50 per cent for project beneficiaries. Indirectly, another 150,000 families are expected to benefit from increased fish catch through lower prices and greater fish availability.

The chief guest in his speech said no effective measure was taken for the development of

the fisheries and forestry sectors during the last 30 years.

Though it is too late, some steps have been taken to improve the wetlands, he said adding once there were tigers and deers in the forests of Moulibazar, but those are almost absent now a days. The joint secretary informed that importance would be given to the opinions of the local people in the MACH project. Based on the success, there will be similar projects in other parts of the country, he added, so we should be sincere in implementing the project.

William J Collis in his speech informed, the MACH project is aimed at overall development of the renowned and vast Haor haor in Moulvibazar district having an area of 99,676 acres and of the people.

The initial survey of 20 villages has been completed, he said. Besides, Turag-Bangshai basin development programme in Tongi and Kalikoir thanas in Dhaka is also a small part of the MACH project, Collis added.

A good number of government officials, UP Chairman, members and NGO activists took part in the workshop held at the Project Development Unit (PDU) auditorium of Bangladesh Tea Research Institute (BTRI) at Srimangal.

Chandpur DIARY

Workshop on family planning

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Sept 17: One day workshop on "Family Planning, Mother and Child Care" was held in DC's conference room on September 12.

Md Rezaul Karim, DC, Chandpur attended the workshop as the chief guest. Md Rustam Ali, Director, Family Planning, Chittagong division presided over the meeting. Eighty seven chairmen of union parishad of the district attended the workshop.

The workshop was addressed, among others, by Dr Dilara Haque, Deputy Director, Family Planning, Dr Abdul Karim, Civil Surgeon, Dr Jahangir Khan, Dr M A Gafur Mia and Md Humayun Kabir, Chairman of Bishnupur union.

Seminar on human resources

A seminar on "Human Resources Development and Continued Education" was held at Chandpur Press Club on September 9 on the occasion of International Literacy Day.

The seminar was presided over by Shikha Rani Sarker, TNO, Chandpur sadar. Md Rezaul Karim, DC, Chandpur attended the meeting as the chief guest.

The seminar was addressed, among others, by Sarder Abdul Kalam, ADC, Quamruzzaman Chowdhury, President, Chandpur Press Club, Dr M A Gafur Mia and Reazuddin Sarker, District Education Officer.

Old man killed in road accident

An old man was killed by a road accident near Wireless bazaar on September 12.

The man was identified as Tofazzel Hossain, 80, of village Torpurchandi in the sadar thana. The accident occurred when a Kachua bound bus from Chandpur dashed the old man while crossing the road. Later on he was rushed to Chandpur sadar hospital where he died.

T-Aman farming on 40,500 hectares

Transplanted Aman paddy has been cultivated on 40,500 hectares of land in all seven thanas during the current season.

According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources, twenty thousand five hundred hectares of land have been brought under High Yielding Variety (HYV) and twenty thousand under local variety. The production target has been fixed at 1,30,000 metric tons. Improved variety of seeds, fertilisers and other agricultural inputs were supplied to the farmers on time to achieve the target.

Janmastomi celebrated

Janmastomi, the birthday of Lord Sree Krishna, was celebrated here recently amid religious fervour and gaiety.

Chandpur Town Puja Committee chalked out an elaborate programme to observe the day. A huge rally was brought out from Kalibari mandir. The programmes of the day included candle lighting, Bhajan, Kirtan, special prayer and discussion meeting. On the occasion a discussion meeting was held at Gopal Akhara at Natun bazaar. The meeting was presided over by Jibon Kanti Chakravarti and addressed, among others, by Md Rezaul Karim, DC, Md Amiruddin, SP, Subash Chandra Roy and Surja Kumar Nath.

Tk 5cr sanctioned for protecting Chandpur

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Sept 17: Tk 5 crore have been sanctioned for Chandpur Town Protection Embankment.

Work of the embankment is going on in full swing. According to Bangladesh Water Development Board, Chandpur office sources, about 700 metre long embankment will be made in both sides of Natun bazaar and Puran bazaar of the town by dumping boulders in the River Meghna to check erosion. Ev-

ery huge quantities of boulders are being dumped in the eroded areas. Besides, boulders are dumped in Haimchar area.

A protection embankment will be made at Haimchar area from Tajherkandi to Katakhali along the bank of the River Meghna. The government has so far sanctioned Tk 1 crore 70 lakh for protection Haimchar area.

UNB from Sharialpur says: Natural calamities like riverbank erosion and cyclone left over 2.5 lakh people homeless in greater Faridpur during the last 25 years.

These homeless people have been living an inhuman life for lack of shelter, work and food. The government-sponsored VGF card programme and loan by some NGOs at high interest rate could not improve their condition.

According to Sharialpur Development Organisation, a local NGO, some 10,000 families lost their homesteads due to erosion by the River Meghna and Fadma in five districts of greater Faridpur during the period.

In its another survey, the NGO found that about 5,000 families were rendered homeless in cyclones in last 20 years. Marginal farmers and poor weavers are among the victims.

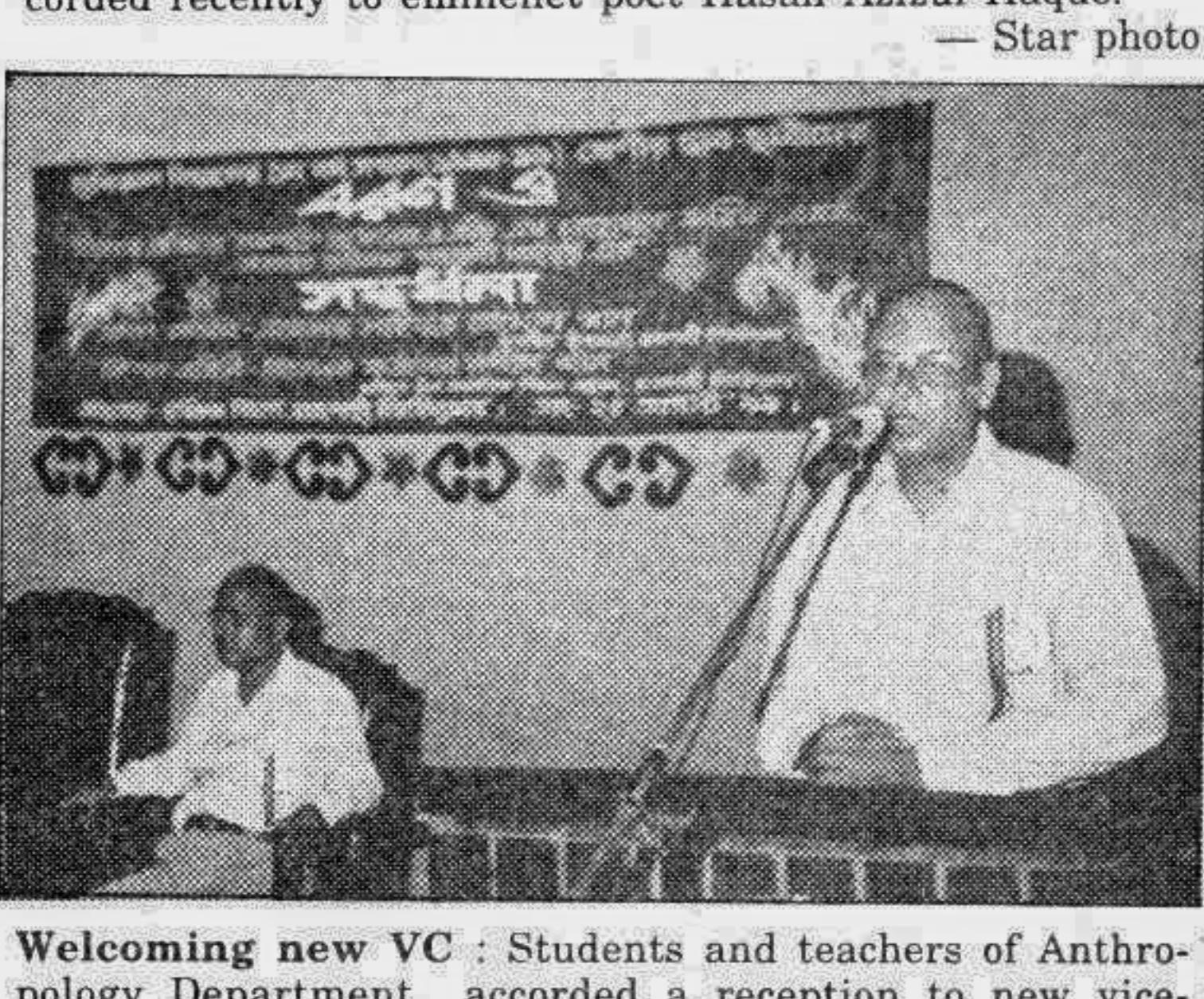
Indian onion, phenisidyl seized: 3 arrested

SATKHIRA, Sept 17: Sadar police and officers of Narcotics Control Department in a joint raid at the local bus terminal recovered three bags of Indian onion with 49 bottles of phenisidyl syrup and arrested three persons in this connection from a bus on Saturday, reports BSS.

Events of districts in picture



Prof Sayeedur Rahman, Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University addressing a reception ceremony which was accorded recently to eminent poet Hasan Azizul Haque.



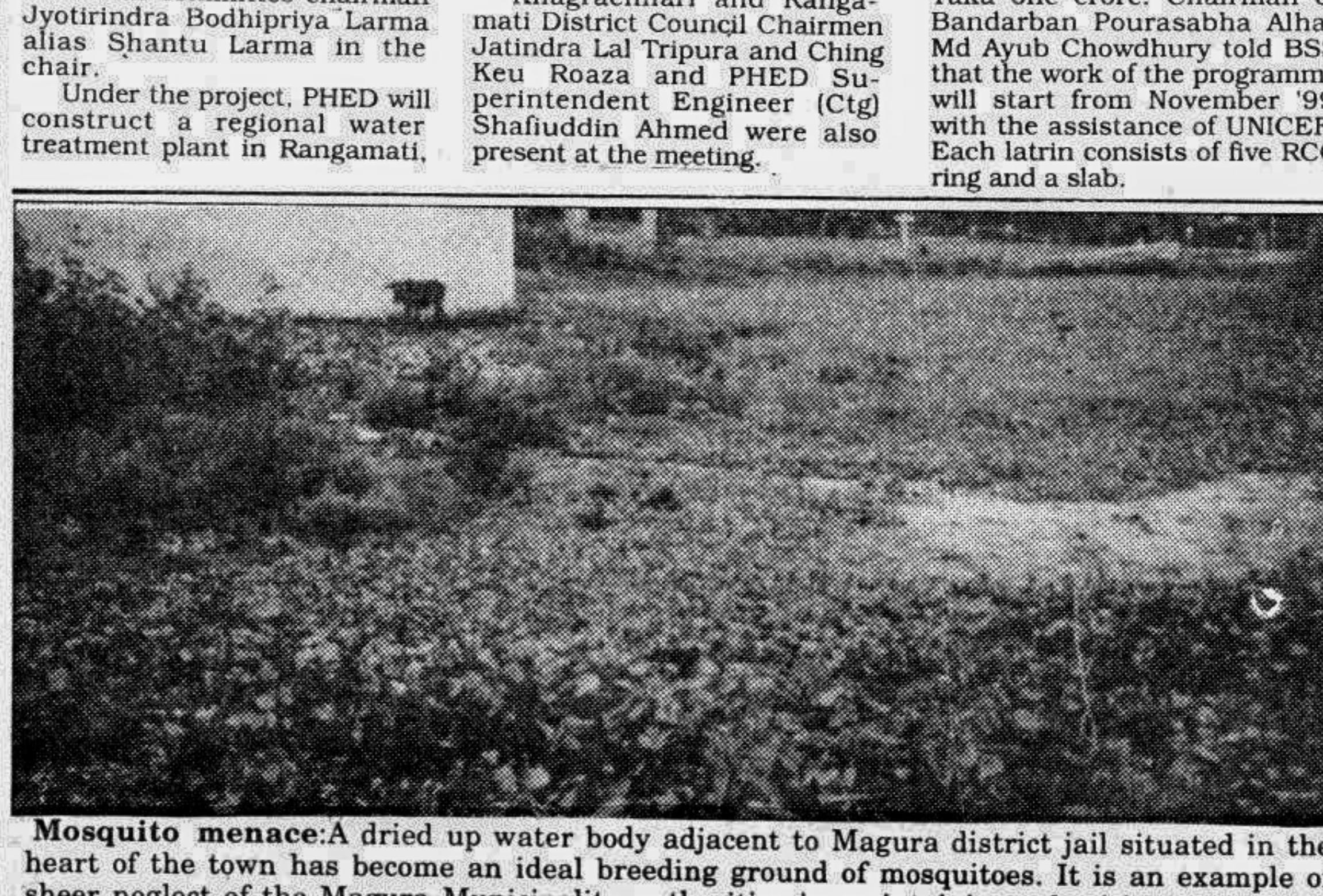
Welcoming new VC: Students and teachers of Anthropology Department accorded a reception to new vice-chancellor of Rajshahi University Prof Sayeedur Rahman Khan recently at Kazi Nazrul Islam auditorium of the university.



Freshers' reception: Prof A H M Zahedul Karim, chairman of the Anthropology Department of Rajshahi University addressing recently a freshers' reception at Kazi Nazrul Islam auditorium of the university.



A session of devotional songs was arranged at Mohangan Nat Mondir in Comilla town recently on the occasion of Janmastami.



Mosquito menace: A dried up water body adjacent to Magura district jail situated in the heart of the town has become an ideal breeding ground of mosquitoes. It is an example of sheer neglect of the Magura Municipality authorities in maintaining a healthy atmosphere in the district town.