

# News snaps

## Discussion on poet Nazrul

**NETRAKONA, Sept 18:** A discussion meeting on the life and works of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam was held at local Shilpakola Academy on September 11, reports BSS.

Netrakona Shilpakola Academy sponsored the discussion. Presided over by Member-Secretary of Netrakona Shilpakola Academy Magistrate Aminul Islam, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Prof Matindra Sarker, Prof Kamal Azad, Assistant Teacher of Netrakona Datta High School Anjan Badra and General Secretary, Netrakona Press Club Shyamalendu Paul. The discussion was followed by a musical soiree.

## 3 JCD activists hurt in bomb blast

**NOAKHALI, Sept 18:** Three activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were critically injured in a bomb explosion at village Ayubpur in Sudharam thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Mosharrar Hossain, Mamun, 25, Zakir Hossain, 22, and Iqbal Hossain, 18, were wounded in the explosion while they were allegedly making bomb along with their associates in the house of Mufiz Mia at night. Police arrested Mamun, Alamgir, Ahmad Ullah and Nurul Islam of West Nartottampur on charge of making bombs.

## BSTI raids in bazaars in Khulna

**KHULNA, Sept 18:** Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI) launched raids in different huts and bazaars of different thanas in Khulna division during the last month to ensure the use of metric system in weight and measurement and to detect its violation by businessmen, reports BSS.

The raids were lunched in Batiaghata thana, Avoyanagar thana of Jessore district and Jhenidah district by mobile courts in cooperation with the respective administrations. The mobile courts detected 28 cases of violation of the use of metric system and realise taka eighteen thousand as fines on the spot.

## 39 uplift projects progressing

**BARISAL, Sept 18:** The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has been implementing 39 projects at an allocation of 840 tonnes of wheat under Food for Works Programme, reports BSS.

Besides, 640 tonnes of wheat and taka 20.57 lakh have been sanctioned for the construction of seven kutcha roads under the programme.

## Bridge on Nakur canal may collapse

**CHANDPUR, Sept 18:** Collapse of the wooden bridge on Nakur canal near the Moyomennesa Women University College has caused serious problem for the students to cross the river, reports UNB.

More than 1,400 students are to cross the canal in ferry boats to and from college every day. Part of the bridge collapsed in August. But the administration has not taken any step to repair the bridge and thus remove the difficulty faced by students.

## 1,180 DTWs to be installed

**MADARIPUR, Sept 18:** A total of 1,180 Deep Tube Wells (DTWs) will be installed in four thanas here in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to Public Health Engineering Department sources, about four lakh people in the rural areas will get pure drinking water after the implementation of the project.

## Orientation programme

From CU Correspondent

**CHITTAGONG, Sept 18:** The orientation programme of the 9th batch (Session 1999-2000) students of Islamic University of Chittagong (IUC) was held at the college auditorium recently.

Prof Md Ali, Vice-Chancellor of the university, presided over the programme where Moulana M Shamsul Islam, University Trust Vice Chairman, Abu Bakar Rafiq Ahmed, Pro-VC of the university and Md Bodul Alam, Trust Secretary of the university spoke on the occasion.



Four students of Puranbazaar Degree College who secured places in the merit list of HSC (Humanities group) examination this year seen with their principal. They are Nurun Nahar, Habiba Ahmed, Yasmin and Mahmuda.

— Star photo

## Recruitment in vacant posts

**KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 18:** In an effort to gear up administrative activities of Khagrachhari Hill District Council, the authorities have decided to immediately fill up its 96 vacant posts, reports UNB.

Officials said permanent residents of the hill district would get priority in recruitment while quota system will be maintained for the repatriated refugees from India and members of PCJSS. Of the posts, 8 are lying vacant in Public Health and Engineering Department while 21 in Family Planning, 14 in Livestock, 7 in Fisheries, 45 in Health and one in Cooperatives departments, the officials said.

## Appeal goes unheeded

**BANDARBAN, Sept 18:** Two policemen have long been living at Naikongchaari Thana Health Centre, creating hazards in medical services, reports UNB.

Civil Surgeon Dr Sarfaraz Khan Chowdhury said the policemen were allowed to stay in the hospital as their thatched house was damaged in the 1997 flood. Since then they have been living in the hospital. The thatched house was built when the two policemen were assigned to guard the local T&T office. Frequent appeals to the Home Minister and the District Council Chairman by the hospital authorities to remove the policemen from the hospital went unheeded. Local Health Department also has sent a letter to the Police Super here asking for steps in this regard. Now it urged the higher authorities to look into the matter.

## Young man beaten to death

**NOAKHALI, Sept 18:** A young man was beaten to death at Kala Darap in Sudharam thana on Tuesday night, reports UNB.

It was not clear why the young man, identified as Dulal, 35, was killed by locals. When contacted, police could not confirm the incident.

## Highways used for thrashing paddy

**NETRAKONA, Sept 18:** Various highways and roads here are being used for thrashing and drying up paddy by local people obstructing smooth plying of vehicles, reports UNB.

Netrakona-Mymensingh, Netrakona-Kendua and Netrakona-Mohanganj via Barhatta roads are often seen filled up with paddy and straw. The roads are busy and everyday hundreds of buses, trucks, cars and other vehicles ply on the roads. Such obstruction sometimes causes accidents. Harvesting of aus paddy is going on in full swing here. Due to inclement weather, people cannot dry up their paddy in courtyards. They rushed to the roads for thrashing and drying up their harvest.

## 275 uplift schemes implemented

**BHERAMARA, Sept 18:** Relief and Rehabilitation Department under Rural Infrastructure Development Programme implemented 275 schemes in six thanas of Kushtia district during the 1998-99 financial year, reports BSS.

The thanas are Bheramara, Kushtia, Kumarkhali, Khoksha, Mirpur and Daulatpur. Of the schemes, 45 were implemented in Bheramara thana, 55 in Daulatpur, 50 in Mirpur, 50 in Kushtia Sadar, 35 in Khoksha and 40 schemes in Kumarkhali. The project included construction and re-construction of roads and culverts and earth filling. About three thousands tonnes of wheat were allotted for the implementation of the schemes.

# Arsenic invades 11 villages in Mymensingh dist

From Aminul Islam

**MYMENSINGH, Sept 18:** Arsenic has been detected in water of 27 tubewells of 11 villages in Trishal thana recently.

An arsenic detection drive was conducted by Rotary Club of Mymensingh after inaugurating a workshop on "Rotary Action For Arsenic Safe Water" at Rotary Complex of Bailer village in Trishal thana.

Presided over by Advocate AHM Khalekuzzaman the workshop was attended by Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh Rafiqul Islam as the chief guest. The workshop was addressed, among others, by Prof Abdul Hoque, Dean of Animal Husbandry Faculty of Bangladesh Agricultural University and Advocate Ferojuddin Ahmed.

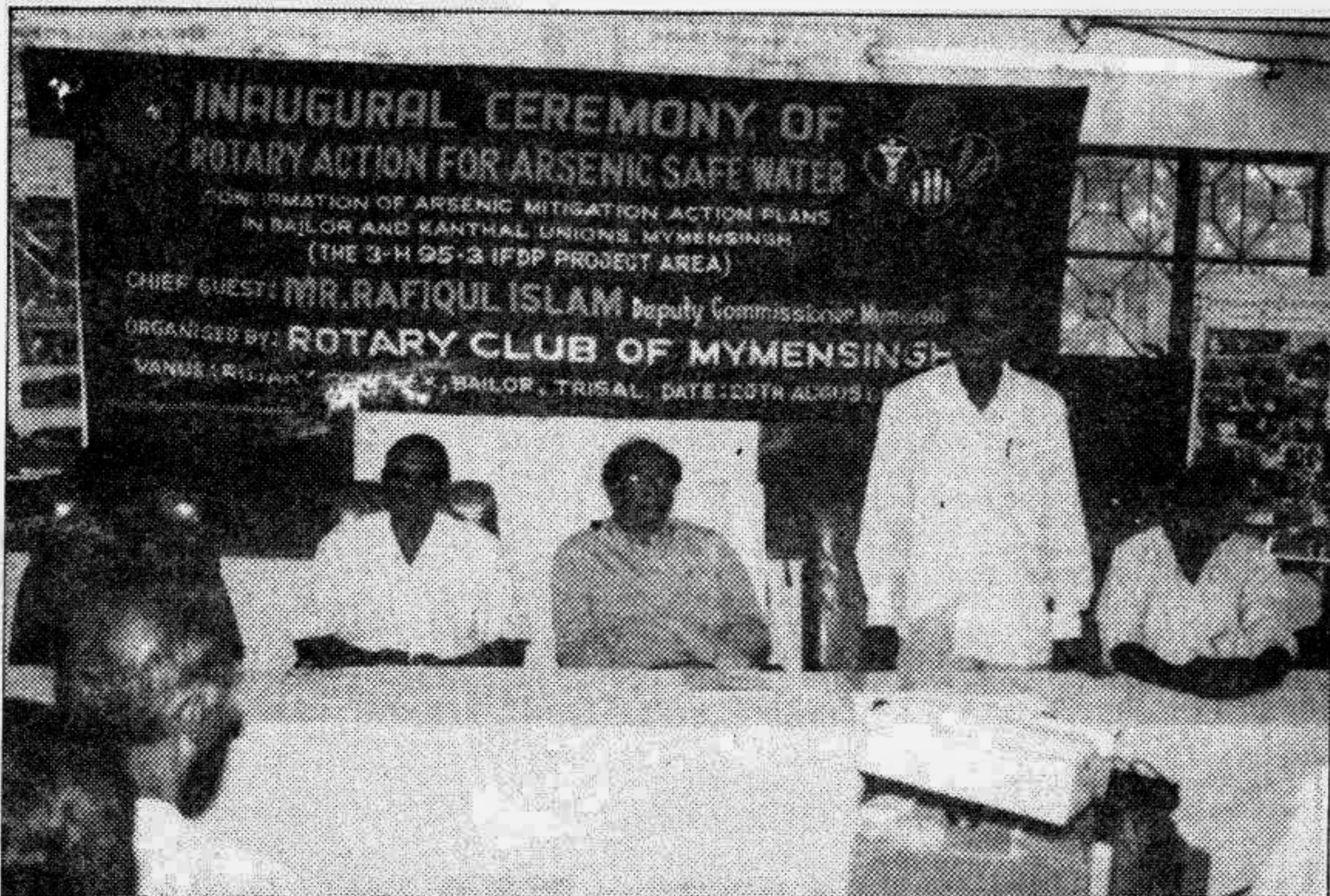
The speakers stressed the need for awareness about arsenic contamination among the rural masses and to combat such menace.

Rotary Club of Mymensingh conducted the test in water of 723 tubewells of Darikanthal, Bilboka, Dhalaiman, Nalchira, Baniadhala, Jashidar, Balidia, Munshipara, Hindupally, Sammukh Bailer and Mathbari villages in Trishal thana and found arsenic in dangerous level in 27 tubewells.

The acceptable rate of arsenic content in drinking water is below zero point zero five (0.05) per cent but the team of Rotary Club of Mymensingh found more arsenic content.

Abdur Rahim, team leader of the programme told The Daily Star that the arsenic content above the normal level would be found in more tubewells of the riverside area which were not included in their programme.

Red marks were put on these tubewells and people have been asked not to drink water of these tubewells. Despite red marks in the water of arsenic contaminated tubewells, people have been drinking water of these tubewells.



Rotary Club of Mymensingh arranged the workshop on "Rotary Action for Arsenic-free Water" at the Rotary complex in Bailer village of Trishal thana which was followed by an arsenic detection programme.

— Star photo

It may be pointed out here that PHED did not make any alternative arrangement for drinking water in the arsenic affected areas.

Rotary Club detected five patients who were affected by arsenic related diseases and they were advised to take treatment immediately.

The local health authorities did not seal off the tubewells. As a result, the people who are drinking water of these tubewells are being affected with arsenic affected diseases. People have demanded testing of water of each and every tubewells in 12 thanas and ensure smooth supply of arsenic-free water.

## Mymensingh DIARY

### Training on scientific report writing

From Our Correspondent

**MYMENSINGH, Sept 18:** Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammad Hossain called upon the students to maintain congenial academic atmosphere at the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) campus in order to impart modern education, research, extension and training programmes peacefully by the faculty members.

Speaking as the chief guest at the certificate awarding ceremony of a week-long higher training course on "Scientific report writing" organised by the Graduate Training Institute (GTI), the vice-chancellor added that a separate computer science and information technology department would be opened very soon including internet system at the university.

Presided over by GTI director Prof Javed Ali Mirza, the function was addressed, among others, by Dr M Shamsuddin, Md Nazrul Islam, A T M Hamidullah, Abu Ahmed Mokammel Haque and Mostafa Kamal.

### Phensidyl recovered

Police recovered 200 bottles of phensidyl through different drives here recently.

The Detective Branch of police recovered 150 bottles of phensidyl recently from different places. Of the recovered drugs, 50 bottles were recovered from a Bogra-Mymensingh passenger bus in Muktagacha thana. 120 more bottles were recovered from separate raids on the same day, police said.

### Cultural evening

The students of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) arranged a cultural evening at Muktagacha of Shilpakochra Joyntul Abedin Auditorium under the auspices of Sangeet Sangha recently.

Vice-Chancellor of BAU attended the function as chief guest with Md Ekabul Ali Monzur, a second year student of BAU, in the chair. The function was also attended by, among others, Prof Ahmed Ullah Sarker, Student Affairs Advisor, proctor Prof Md Abdul Awal, A K M Zakir Hossain, general secretary of BAUCSU Md. Arif Jahangir and president of BAU BCL unit Md Mishbahul Chandra.

### Body recovered

Police recovered the bodies of two infants from a canal recently.

On being informed, police recovered the bodies of two infants aged about four months from Nuna Canal of Dhakua in Tarakanda thana. The bodies were floating in the canal. The victims were identified as Momen and Mamun.

### Drugs burnt

Local Narcotics Control Directorate (NCD) with the assistance of Natural Environment Preservation Society (NEPS) burnt a huge quantity of drugs at NEPS office premises at Kazi Nazrul Islam Road in the town recently.

Md Bazul Hasan, Deputy Director of Narcotics Control Directorate, Magistrate Md Saldur Rahman and NEPS officials were present on the occasion. The drugs included phensidyl syrup, foreign and country made liquor, beer, hemp and other kinds of drugs which were recovered from different places of the district.

## Pry edn programme in 2 dists faces setback

Despite government's tremendous efforts to ensure education for all by the year 2000, the universal primary education programme in two district appears to suffer a setback, reports UNB.

Primary education in Bagerhat district under Food for Education programme has been facing setback due to various irregularities and administrative mismanagement.

The government programme of "education for all by 2005" also faces uncertainty here due to corruption by a section of teachers and managing committees with people having vested interest.

Admission of students in primary schools has increased remarkably over the years, but the standard of education has not improved.

Besides, a large number of students enrolled themselves only for rice and wheat given under the Food for Education Programme (FEP).

A section of corrupt officials with connivance of the mem-

bers of some school managing committees misappropriate rice and wheat of the programme showing additional students in the register.

The authorities concerned are distributing rice and wheat to the students coming from well-off families depriving the poor students, many guardians alleged adding that the teachers in many schools take Tk 10 from the students as toll.

District Primary Education office sources said that some 33 posts of headmasters and 43 of assistant teachers have been lying vacant in the district since long hampering FEP.

There are 602 government and 484 registered primary schools in nine thanas here.

The number of schools under FEP here: Sadar thana — 30, Fakirhat — 14, Mollarhat-25, Chitalmari and Kachua-27 each, Rampal-18, Mongla-19, Moreganj-65 and Sha-rankhola-49. Dilapidated condition of primary schools, lack of teachers and furniture and price hike of reading materials are to blame for the possible

failure of the government programme.

In most thanas of Kishoreganj district, students were seen attending classes under the open sky due to shabby condition of their school buildings.

Local people alleged that when several schools had been overcrowded with teachers, some others had no required number of tutors.

They urged the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to appoint adequate number of teachers to the schools.

Some 530 non-government primary schools have been grappling with numerous problems, sending hundreds of students scrambling for admission into government ones.

According to local education office, the schools, including 405 registered and 125 unregistered, have got about 88,000 students.

Besides, teachers of the schools are reluctant to properly perform their jobs as they do not regularly get their salaries.

## Pulse output declining in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

**KUSHTIA, Sept 18:** Pulse production has decreased in recent years as farmers are showing more interest in cultivating high yielding paddy in the district.

Farmers all over the district, which was once famous for pulse farming, are bringing more and more lands under IRRI and boro cultivation. Growers said they are gaining more profit from the cultivation. Moreover, cultivators receive enough patronisation and incentive from the government for growing high yielding paddy, they added.

Kushtia farmers usually several varieties of pulse such as moog, masur, khesari, maskalat, motor, orhor and chhola in rabi season.

But declining trend in pulse cultivation has resulted in scarcity of the crop in the markets. Scarcity of pulse has also contributed to price hike, depriving many poor people of low-cost nutrition extracted from pulses.

Pulses are rich in food value. The seeds contain high quality nutrition.

The farmers of the district are also facing acute fodder crisis for their domestic animals because of non-availability of

khesari, orhor, maskalat and kolai. Farmers use these seed plants as fodder.

Farmers have urged the authorities concerned to immediately steps to encourage growers to grow pulses in the district.

Another report adds: Prices of essentials have shot up in local markets, causing immense suffering to the poor and low income group.

Fish, egg and meat are getting dearer as supplies dwindle in markets. Vegetables have also become rare items.

Beef is being sold between Tk 50 and Tk 60 per kg, while mutton ranges between Tk 90 and Tk 100 per kg. Coarse rice is now being sold between Tk 10 and Tk 13 per kg.

Besides, pure mustered and soya bean oils are hardly available. Most of the people of the district have been suffering from various intestinal diseases due to consumption of adulterated soya bean oil, which is now being sold at Tk 50 per kg.

### Tk 9,69,600 for development of orphanages

**KISHOREGANJ, Sept 18:** The Social Welfare Department spent Taka 9,69,600 for the development of 18 non-government orphanages here in 1998-1999 fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, more than one lakh inmates of 18 out of 32 non-government orphanages were benefited with this fund.

Besides, non-government orphanages there are two government orphanages here.



Smuggling of Indian goods including sugar is rampant in Jhenidah district. The contrabands are usually carried on rooftop of Barisal bound buses plying through Nimtala bus stand in Kaliganj of Jhenidah district.

— Star photo

## Fund shortage hits handloom industry

**RAJSHAHI, Sept 18:** Traditional handloom industry in Charghat thana is on the verge of extinction due to price-hike of yarn and dye, and lack of necessary fund, reports UNB.

About 6,000 hand-operated looms have already been closed down at different areas of the thana, including Yusufpur, Tantipara, Murali, Miapara and Anupampur.

Due to the closure, some 15,000 weavers, working in these handlooms, have become unemployed and at present, over one lakh people involved in the profession have been facing hardship.

Nearly 2,500 hand-operated weaving machines in Yusufpur Tantipara were damaged by the recent flooding and now remained completely inoperative.

The production of lungi and saree declined alarmingly, as the weavers could not buy materials for want of necessary funds.

They used to purchase yarn from mahajan at higher rate in absence proper policy of distributing yarn and other materials.

Import of low-quality yarn from India by a section of importers is also posing a threat to producing quality products, sources said.

The weavers have expressed concern over importing low-quality Indian yarn and urged the authorities concerned to take action against unscrupulous traders, who in collaboration with local police and BDR, are selling those at various markets of the thana.

As the handlooms are closed down, many workers are forced to choose various odd professions, including begging and rickshaw pulling.

The owners of the hand-

looms said the authorities concerned should supply yarn to them at fair price and provide interest free loan aiming at resolving the existing problems of the handloom industry.

The weavers have also urged the authorities concerned to open selling centres at government level in a bid to boost production.

## Tk 25 cr phone bills outstanding in 11 S-dists

From Staff Correspondent

**BARISAL, Sept 18:** Nearly taka 25 crore telephone bills of state-run Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board have remained outstanding with about 20 thousand subscribers in 11 southern districts, sources said.

Of them, about Tk 9 crore bills have remained outstanding with the public sector subscribers. Tk 5 crore with the semi government organisations and the rest Tk 11 crore with the private subscribers in these districts.

The districts include Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Pirojpur, Barguna, Jhalakathi, Faridpur, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Gopalganj and Rajbari.

State-run BIWTA (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority), municipalities, BSCIC (Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industry Corporation) estates, some mills and factories are prominent defaulters, the sources said adding that, in recent times, some private-owned pay phone and fax shop owners are also being included in the list of defaulters.

## Events of districts in picture



Magura district unit of Freedom Fighters' Rehabilitation Society organised a rally recently at the local press club premises.

— Star photo



Chandpur unit of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society distributing relief materials recently among the volunteers of Community Police.

— Star photo



A seminar on "Motivation on Woman and Child Development" was arranged jointly by Jhenidah District Information Office and UNICEF on September 9 at Jhenidah Zilla Parisad auditorium.

— Star photo

## Joypurhat flood damages crops worth Tk 15.50cr

**JOYPURHAT, Sept 18:** The last month's 10-day flood here wrought a crop loss of Tk 15.50 crore, reports UNB.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), standing crops on 7,000 hectares of land in five thanas were damaged in the flood. Of which, paddy on 3,504 hectares of land has been damaged completely while 3,496 hectares partially.

It said transplanted Aman on 6,481 hectares of land was damaged. Of which, 3,450 hectares was damaged completely. Besides, banana, sugarcane and vegetables on 519 hectares were also damaged.

According to DAE, the flood would have little effect on achieving production target of Aman paddy as the cultivation has surpassed its target.

Some 72,306 hectares of land have been brought under Aman cultivation during the current season as against its target of 71,000 hectares. The source said an agricul-

ture rehabilitation programme is being undertaken to overcome the loss incurred in agricultural sector.

District Relief and Rehabilitation Office source said, some 11,283 families were affected by the short-lived flood from August 22 to 31.

Some 597 dwelling houses, 55 km kutcha roads, one km embankment, 10 culverts and two educational institutions were damaged by the flooding.

## Two killed in road mishap

From A Correspondent

**FENI, Sept 18:** Two persons were killed when a mini-bus and a bus collided on Feni-Majid Road on September 7 in the morning.

The two persons were killed on the spot. The identity of the victims could not be known. A case was lodged.