

## 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 Shilpkala Academy on September 11, reports BSS.

Netrakona Shilpkala Academy sponsored the discussion. Presided over by Member-Secretary of Netrakona Shilpkala 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

NOAKHALLI, Sept 18 : Three activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were critically injured in a bomb explosion at village Ayupur in Sudharmthan on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Mosharraf 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 Muiz Mia at night. Police arrested Mamun, Alamgir, Ahmad Ullah and Nurul Islam of West Narottampur on charge of masking bombs.

### BSTI raids in bazaars in Khulna

KHULNA, Sept 18 : Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI), Khulna launched raids in different hats 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 launched in Batiaghata thana, Avonagar 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 take eight 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 Moyennen 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

MADRIPUR, 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 Mouliana 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 Puranbazar 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 PCSS. 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 Naikongcha Thana Health Complex, creating hazards in medical services, reports UNB.

Civil Surgeon Dr Sarfaraj 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

NOAKHALLI, Sept 18 : A young man was beaten to death at Kalai Darap in Sudharmthan 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-Mohonganj 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.

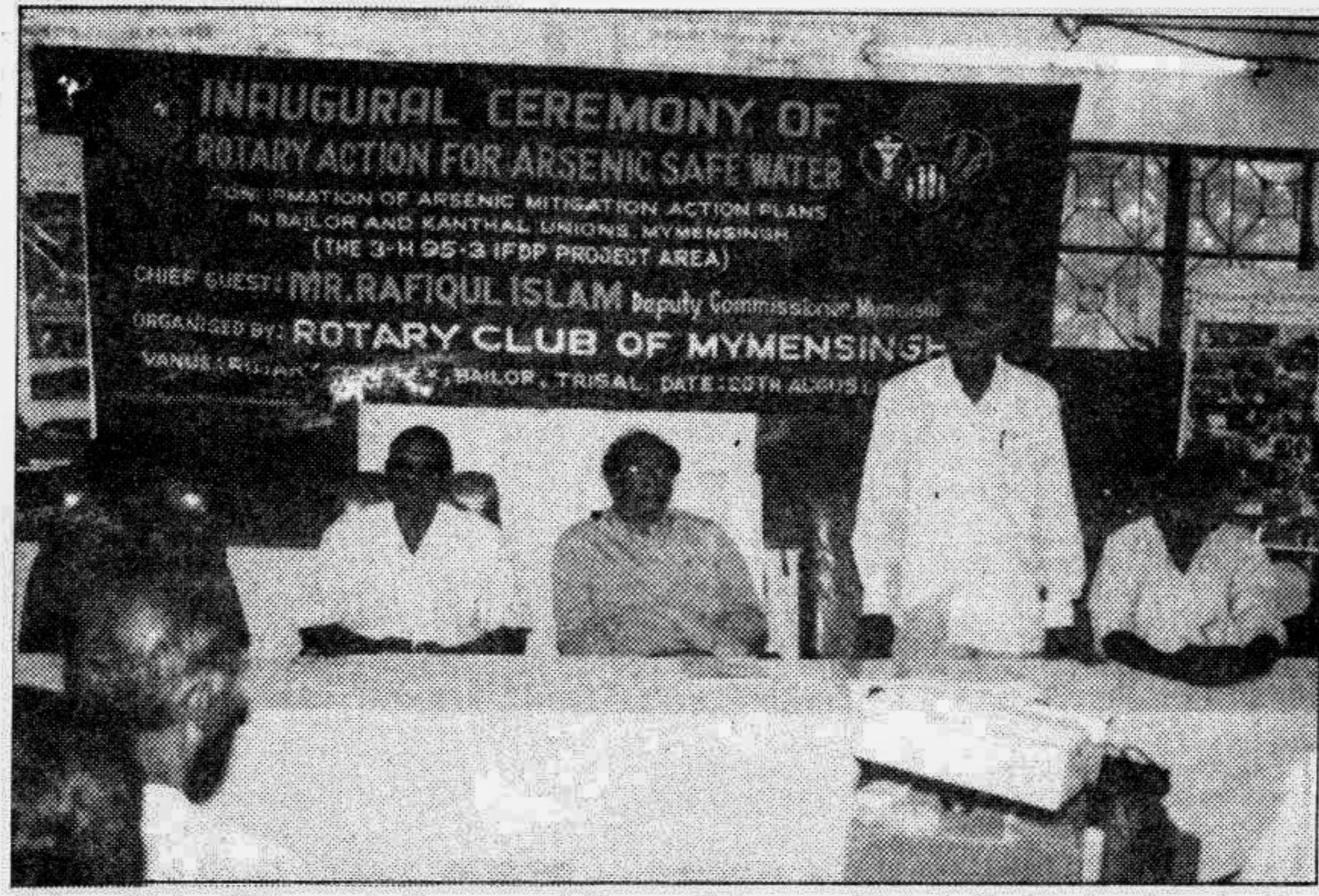
### 275 uplift schemes implemented

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



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

— Star photo

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.

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.

## 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 districts 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 Shadrangola — 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 grappled 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 IRI 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 moong, masur, khesari, maskalai, 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.

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

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

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kheshari, orhor, maskalai and chhola. Farmers use these seeds 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 mustard and soybean oils are hardly available. Most of the people of the district have been suffering from various intestinal diseases due to consumption of adulterated soybean oil, which is now being sold at Tk 50 per kg.

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