

# News snaps

## College girl abducted

**NARAYANGANJ, Sept 25:** A college girl was abducted by miscreants from Modanganj Launch Ghat in Port thana here on Thursday, reports UNB.

Witnesses said Rozina Begum, 22, a student of Harganga College of Munshiganj, fell prey to the kidnapers while she was going to the college.

## Body recovered

**SATKHIRA, Sept 25:** Police recovered the decomposed body of a young man from a canal at Bhomra frontier village in the sadar thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The victim, Abdul Salek of village Bhomra, was believed to have been killed by Indian citizens. Family sources said some of Salek's Indian friends called him out of their residence of September 18 and he went missing since then. Police sent the body, bearing a number of torture marks, to sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

## 205 bottles of phensidyl seized

**NARAYANGANJ, Sept 25:** Police recovered 205 bottles of Indian phensidyl from a bus at Shimral Crossing on Dhaka-Chittagong highway early Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said on suspicion they rummaged through a Dhaka-bound bus coming from Sylhet and seized the drugs in an abandoned sack. They, however, could not arrest any one in this connection.

## 12 injured in road accident

**BARISAL, Sept 25:** At least 12 people, nine of them seriously, were injured in an accident at Kashipur on Dhaka-Barisal highway on Thursday morning, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the accident took place at about 6:30 am when a microbus rammed into a pickup. Nine of the injured were admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College hospital. They were identified as Malek 30, Babul 25, Shaheen 25, Zakir 27, Babu 14, Sazal 16, Shawkat 6, Forman Ali 40, and Bashir 25.

## Tubewells installation scheme

**NATRAKONA, Sept 25:** Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) installed 295 shallow tube wells and 387 Tara deep set tubewells in different rural areas of 10 thanas during the last fiscal year, reports BSS.

The work was implemented under the Rural Water Supply Project of the government. Besides, PHED repaired and resank 216 shallow tubewells during the period. An official source said, money amounting to Taka one crore 27 lakh was spent for the installation, repairing and resinking of the tubewells.

## More phensidyl seized

**SATKHIRA, Sept 25:** Satkhira Narcotics Control Department in two separate drives recovered 48 bottles of phensidyl syrup and arrested one person in this connection on Monday, reports BSS.

Police said, acting on a tip-off, Narcotics Control Circle Inspector Shahajam Ali Talukder raided the house of Abdul Gaffar of village Babulia and recovered five bottles of phensidyl syrup and arrested Gaffar in this connection. In another drive at Kamalnagar village, Narcotics officials recovered 43 bottles of phensidyl syrup from the houses of Shamsur Ali and Moslem Ali of the village. Both Shamsur and Moslem managed to escape.

## Man held with counterfeit note

**SATKHIRA, Sept 25:** One person was arrested with counterfeit currency note of 100 US dollar denomination on Tuesday from a money changing centre in the town, reports BSS.

Police sources said, Ishrat Hossain, 36, son of Hajrat Ali of village Batulia in Kalaroa thana came to a money changing centre in the town and gave a note of 100 US dollar to the money changer. The money changer, being suspicious about the note, caught Ishrat with the help of other shopkeepers and handed him over to police.

## Poverty alleviation programme

**KISHOREGANJ, Sept 25:** Dawat Manobik Unnayan Sangstha (DAMAUS), a social welfare organisation, disbursed Taka 1.55, 000 among the poor and small businessmen in Kuliarchar thana in the month of August '99, reports BSS.

The amount has been given to alleviate poverty and sewing of 'Nakshi Khantha'. Fifty adult education centres are being run by the organisation in Kuliarchar thana. According to Sangstha sources, this organisation is running their activities in accordance with the Islamic rules and regulations.

## Mother, son electrocuted

**GAZIPUR, Sept 25:** Mother and son were electrocuted on Wednesday at village Gopalpur under Tongi Pourasabha, reports BSS.

They were identified as Sajeda Begum, 42, and Sujan, 3, Tongi thana police recovered the bodies and sent those to Gazipur sadar hospital for autopsy.

## Young man with revolver arrested

**MUNSHIGANJ, Sept 25:** One young man was arrested with a Chinese revolver on Wednesday from Daskania in Panchashar union, police said, reports BSS.

They said Golam Mustafa (Jhalak), son of Awlad Hossain of Khanka Dalapara under Ramal union of sadar thana, was nabbed with the revolver while he was roaming with his accomplice, who fled the scene apprehending police.

## Life-term for arms possessor

**MAGURA, Sept 25:** A court here has convicted two people and sentenced them to lifetime imprisonment in an arms case, reports UNB.

Court sources said district and Sessions Judge Mohammad Shahiduzzaman found Zakir and Imran guilty of unauthorised possession of firearms after examining witnesses on September 16. According to the prosecution case, police arrested Zakir and Imran with a shutter gun and a pistol after chasing them from Bethulla Bazaar while they were taking preparation to commit dacoity on January 26, 1998. After filing a case, police charge-sheeted them in an arms case.

## Tk 11.75 lakh Shanti Nibash project

**MEHERPUR, Sept 25:** The Social Welfare Department has taken up a project to build an old-age home styled 'Shanti Nibash' at a cost of Taka 11.75 lakh in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the old-age home will be constructed on an acre of land at Dhygirpara in the Sadar Upazila. About 30 shelterless old men and 16 women will be housed in the six semi-pucca rooms of the 'Shanti-Nibash'. Besides dormitory, the home will have a dining room, a sitting room, a medical centre and other facilities.

## Construction of bridge progressing

**NARSINGDI, Sept 25:** The construction of a 160-metre bridge over the River Old Bahmaputra is progressing fast and expected to be completed by the middle of next year, an official source, said reports BSS.

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has taken up the project at a cost of taka 1.80 crore in the current fiscal year. With completion of the bridge the road communication between Belabo thana and Kishoreganj district will be easier. LGED has also taken up another project at an allocation of Taka 1.23 crore for the construction of a 140-metre bridge over the River Arial Khan in Raipur thana.

## Clash leaves 25 hurt

**JAMALPUR, Sept 25:** At least 25 villagers were injured, 9 critically, in a violent clash between rival groups in village Jhaugara of Melandaha thana on Saturday morning, reports UNB.

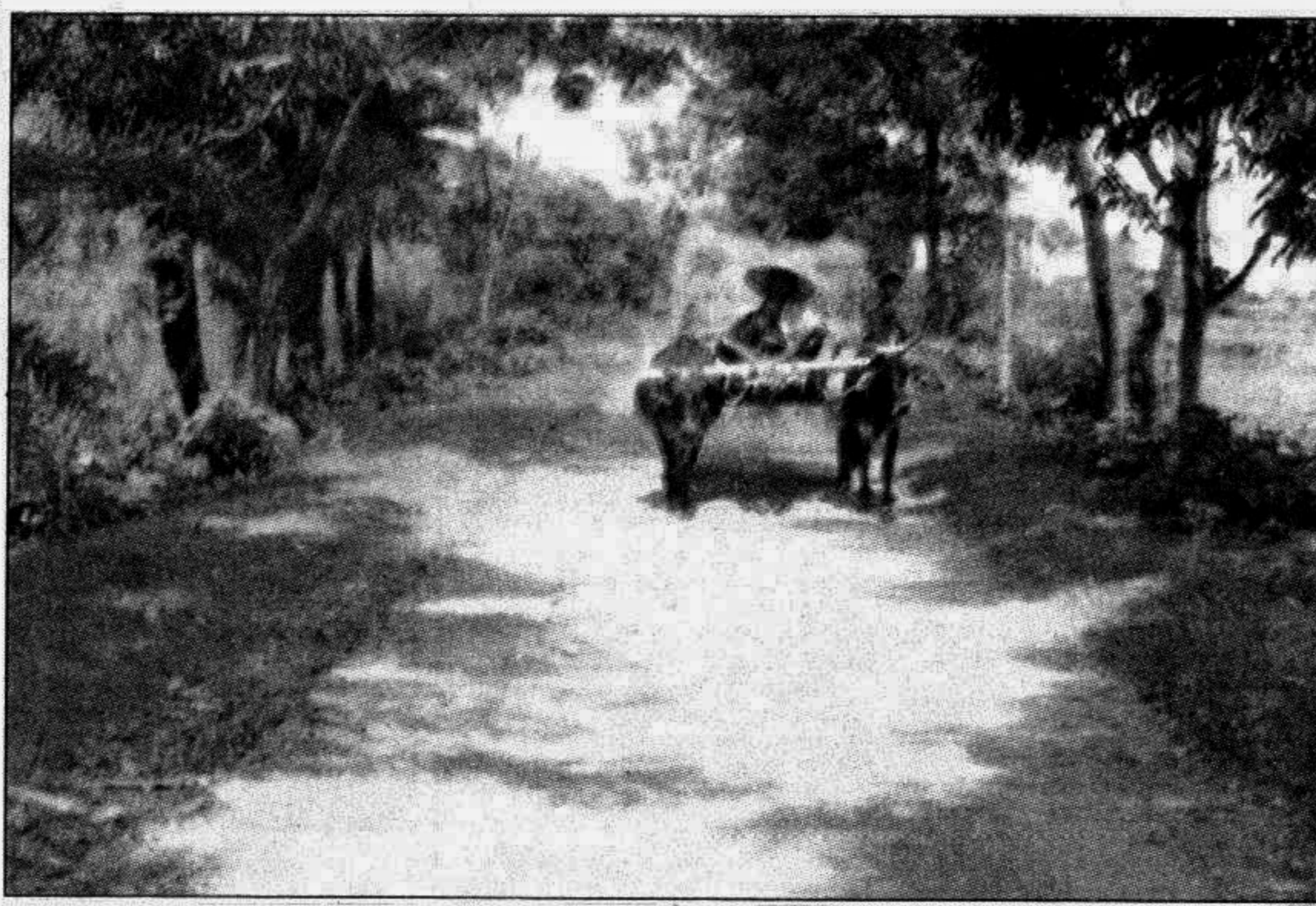
Residents said the clash between supporters of Abdul Quddus and Roushan Ali ensued over land dispute. Both sides used lethal weapons. Of the injured, Golam Mustafa, 45, Mofazzal Hossain, 40, Roushan Ali, 50, Jakir Hossain, 25, Baduzzaman, 45, Shahidul Islam, 40, Abdul Qadir, 35, Idris Ali, 40, and another unidentified man were rushed to Jamalpur Sadar Hospital. Attending doctors said their condition was critical.

## Workshop on water-hyacinth

**MUNSHIGANJ, Sept 25:** A field day and workshop on the use of water-hyacinth organised by Kendal Crop Research Sub-Centre was held at Tongbiri thana last week, reports BSS.

Fifty farmers of different unions of Tongbiri thana participated.

Experts of the Agriculture Department acquainted the farmers with the multiple use of water-hyacinth which is plenty in Bangladesh.



**Joy of harvesting:** A farmer of village Ganna in the Sadar thana of Jhenidah district turning home happily from his field with the newly harvested Transplanted Aman paddy. — Star photo by Delwar Kabir

# Bright prospect of investment in agri-business in Sylhet region

From Iqbal Siddiquee

**SYLHET, Sept 25:** There is ample scope for the development of agriculture in greater Sylhet region. By using modern technology and resolving the existing problems, Sylhet can easily take the role of leadership in agri-business and become a growth point of economy of Bangladesh.

It was viewed by the speakers at a day long seminar on 'Investment opportunities in agri-business in Sylhet region' jointly organised by the Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industries (SCCI), Bangladesh Bank and ATDP, a USAID-supported project under the Ministry of Agriculture.

Md Safwan Chowdhury, President of the Sylhet Chamber presided over the function while Prof Md Habibur Rahman, Vice-Chancellor of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology was the chief guest.

Prof MA Aziz, Treasurer of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology read out the key note paper, while Muharur Haque, General Manager, Bangladesh Bank, Shamsur Alam, GM, Sonali Bank, Khondaker Abul Khair, GM Janata Bank and Jakaria Chowdhury, a partner of Sylhet Dairy took part in the discussion. Ronald P Black team leader of Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Project (ATDP) gave briefing on the project at the very beginning of the programme.

In the key note paper it was stated that, Sylhet region lies in the extreme north-east border of the country. It is clearly a distinct region from the other ones, for its geo-physical and geo-locational considerations. Rivers and streams, lakes and waterways, extensive marshy lands, hillocks, forests and jungles, mountains and hills,

plain land, new and old land areas and climatic factors with heavy rainfall contribute to the geographical variety of Sylhet.

Giving some data, the main speaker said the Sylhet region holds a bright prospect for agri-business. It has adequate potentialities. Some headway has already been achieved in the field of dairy farming, development of the agricultural machineries, production of aromatic seeds for a finer variety, cultivation of fruits, vegetables and production of fertiliser.

Sylhet is now exporting quite a large quantity of fresh fruits, vegetables, fish and fish products to the UK and Middle Eastern countries, the paper mentioned adding, frozen fish and dry fish are also exported to some other countries. But the export is being greatly hampered for problems like shortage of space in the air craft and mismanagement and bottlenecks in the export.

Vice-president of the Prime Bank, SM Shamsul Alam, former president of the Sylhet Chamber MA Salam Chowdhury regional manager of Uttara Bank, Mamun Chowdhury and Alim Chowdhury of Alim Engineering, Trustee of Overseas Centre, Nurul Islam, DGM of Krishi Bank, Md Mostafizur Rahman, Dr Abdul Awal Biswas of Shahjalal Varsity of Science and Technology, took part in the discussion.

Abdus Salam, Incharge of the regional offices of ATDP gave the concluding speech.

The discussants said of the total crop lands of Sylhet, only one-fifth is under irrigation. This is why the vast tracts of land remain fallow during the winter season. Nevertheless, Sylhet is a food surplus area. The forest of the region is on 516.29 square kilometre. With diversified flora and fauna, the

forests here are not only the above of wild animals, but also the store house of natural resources, the speakers said. Forest resources of the region are valuable timber, fuel woods, bamboos, Nolkhagra, Ekra seeds, canes, medicinal herbs, glass sand, sand stone, pebbles and boulder, peat coal and atomic ores. Tea, rubber and pineapples are the produce of the hilly areas. The orange gardens are almost extinct now-a-days.

Sylhet region is the highest foreign exchange earner in the country through export of manpower. It is estimated that, about half of the Bangladeshi expatriates are from this region. According to a recent survey, foreign remittance contributes about 30 per cent of the national savings. The region has a very good position in the bank deposits whereas the advances given by the banks is only 25 per cent.

Sylhet region contains a good deposit of natural gas. Out of 21 gas fields of the country, nine are situated in Sylhet, while some others are also being developed. Natural gas is being used as raw material for the fertiliser factory and power stations.

Emphasis was given on the improvement of irrigational facilities, raising the use of fertiliser and HYV seeds, bringing the fallow lands under cultivation and ensuring adequate credit facilities in the workshop.

Besides, the participants also stressed on the increase of export facilities, dredging of rivers in the region with a view to developing the navigability for expansion of water transportation and for marketing the locally produced agri-machineries.

# Brahmanbaria DIARY

## 50 injured in rival's clash

From Our Correspondent

**BRAHMANBARIA, Sept 25:** At least 50 persons were injured in a clash following an altercation between two groups of two mahallas village Moind in the sadar thana recently.

According to police and eye witness, two groups namely Raja and Pagla group of Moind northpara created a controversy over naming the own group. Following altercation they armed with lethal weapons locked in a clash which lasted for four hours. As a result, 50 persons were injured. Of them, 10 persons were admitted to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital in critical condition and the rest 40 were released after first aid. At least 30 persons were injured in another clash between two rival groups at village Atikura of Pandauk union in Nasirnagar thana following past enmity. The rival groups armed with lethal weapons locked in clash following a previous clash between them. As a result 30 persons were injured. Of them, six persons were admitted to hospital and the rest were released after first aid. Seriously injured persons were identified as Jalal Mia, 45, Abdur Rahim, 65, Abbas Mia, 45 and Shahjahan Mia, 45.

## Theft at watch shop

A theft was committed at a watch shop on Tufayel-Azam road recently.

A group of thieves broke open the door and entered into the watch shop named Taranga Electro Centre and took away 18 pieces of Titanic watch and two bags of various kinds of watch. Owner of the shop, Subrato Deb filed a General Diary (GD) with Brahmanbaria sadar thana.

## Baby raped

A six-year-old baby, daughter of a day labourer, was raped by Sopon Mia, 25, at village Ganasampur of Shingebil union in the sadar thana recently. According to police sources, the victim went to pick up black berry at the nearby orchard. Then Sopon Mia, 25, son of Shirajul Islam of village Rupa went to the same orchard and forcibly raped the girl at a nearby bush.

Hearing the hue and cry of the victim, her relatives nabbed the culprit on the spot. Later on the culprit was handed over to Brahmanbaria sadar thana police.

## Two killed in train mishap

A seven-year-old boy named Md Sajib, 7, son of Md Firuj Md of village Wakliapara was crushed under the wheels of a running train — the Titas Comuter near their house in Ashugonj bandar thana recently.

According to eye witness, while Sajib Mia, a student of class two, was coming back from Bartala Primary School through the Ashugonj-Brahmanbaria railway line, the Titas Comuter train knocked down him from behind and crushed him to death under its wheels.

Another unidentified boy was beheaded by Sylhet bound the Joyntika train at Brahmanbaria railway station. According to eye witness, the boy was walking on the roof top of the running train. While he was walking on the roof top of the train, his head was dashed against the over bridge of the station. As a result he died instantly.

## Shortage of river vessel

Passengers travelling along different water bodies from the district headquarters to Bancharampur, Nabinagar, Nasirnagar and Singebil by river vessels have been suffering a lot due to shortage of river vessels.

The passengers have to travel with life risk in the overloaded water vessels. The cause of boat accidents is also attributed to overloading of passengers. Besides, the vessels are more interested in carrying goods rather than carrying passengers causing more sufferings to the passengers. About 50 per cent of the space meant for the passengers on the deck of a launch are occupied by the goods. Moreover, most of the launches take extra time to reach their destination due to outdated engine and unscheduled delay in reaching different stoppages. Launch terminals at many places do not have sheds and some are in dilapidated condition compounding the sufferings of the passengers during the rainy season and sunny days. A lot of engine driven boats playing through different rivers and canals are disturbing the vessels in their smooth journey causing boat accident in different waterbodies.

## Five including four of a family drown

Five persons including four members of a family drown at Khaljura Beel in Akhaura thana when a boat capsized by gusty weather in the beel at around 3:30 pm recently.

According to family sources, 10 passengers were going by a small engine driven boat through Khaljura Beel from Akhaura cremation ground to Anowarpur. When the boat was in the middle of the beel, a gusty wind accompanied by rain started.



Teachers of TLM programme undergoing training at a centre. — Star photo

# Nabadiganta Moulvibazar set to eradicate illiteracy

From Rajat Kanti Goswami

**MOULVI BAZAR, Sept 25:** 'Nabadiganta Moulvibazar', a pilot programme on Total Literacy Movement (TLM) is going on here in full swing.

The goal of TLM Programme is to eradicate illiteracy from the district by June 2000. Non-formal Education Department under the Ministry of Primary and Mass education has been coordinating the programme. A district coordinator has been appointed to coordinate and look after the programme.

The programme has been launched for imparting the knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic to villagers including women. The Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Moulvibazar is the guardian for implementation of TLM programme.

According to the official source of Informal Education Department here, they have decided to bring some 25,56,19 people of 11 to 45 age group under the programme. Of the targeted people 1,19,868 are males and 1,17,560 females.

Nabadiganta Moulvibazar — the literacy implementation association comprising local elite would look after the programme in about 8,665 pilot centres of six thanas and three

pourasabhas from February next.

The Primary Education Department has completed a survey on illiterate people here. According to the survey — there are 29,220 illiterate people in the sadar thana, of which 16,050 are women.

In Srimongal thana, the number of illiterate people is 50,035, of which 25,568 are women. In Baralekha thana, the number of illiterate people are 24,758, of which 13,610 are women. In Rajnagar thana, the number of illiterates is 34,355 where 17,235 are women. In Kamalgonj thana 46,489 people are illiterate. Of them 24,922 are women and in Kulaura thana this number is 70,762 where 38,346 are women.

The thana-wise population is as follows: Moulvibazar Sadar 23,93,378; Srimongal 23,2,809; Baralekha 20,0,674; Rajnagar 17,428; Kamalgonj 2,03,075 and Kulaura 3,37,888. According to a survey in Moulvibazar district comprises 67 union parishads, three pourasabhas and six thanas. A total of 25,56,19 people between the age group of 11 and 45 are illiterate out of 13,88,104 total people.

Md Humayun Kabir Ma-

# 100,000 Sirajganj weavers in misery

From A Correspondent

**SIRAJGANJ, Sept 25:** The fate of about 100,000 weavers has become uncertain because of scarcity and price-hike of raw materials.

A large number of handloom factories have already been closed down. The owners said that they had been forced to close down their weaving factories as prices of yarn, dyes, chemical and other inputs marked abnormal rise in recent days.

Trading at Sohagpur and Shahjadpur bazaars, major marketing centres for handloom products, has been declining as synthetic cloths are gaining popularity. Common people are now showing more interest to the low-priced synthetic cloths.

Local weaving factory owners said that the state-run Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) had raised the prices of cotton yarns, creating

uneven competition with cheaper synthetic cloths in the local markets.

Besides, low-cost smuggled Indian products, especially saree, have flooded the markets, aggravating the situation.

Finding no other alternative, the weavers are forced to give up their age-old profession and are trying to take up new ones.

When contacted, Abdul Kader, owner of a weaving factory, said his factory has long been closed due to scarcity of raw materials and fund shortage.

Manju and Belal, day-labourers in handloom factories, echoed Abdul Kader. They said their family members are passing hard days.

The local people have urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to help run the ailing handloom industry in the district.

# 'Past govts used madrasa teachers politically'

**KESHABPUR (Jessore), Sept 25:** Education Minister ASHK Sadique said the madrasa education is a historical trend in the national curriculum, reports BSS.

"The government has taken a specific programme to improve the madrasa education," he said while addressing a gathering of the madrasa teachers and alicms at the local Alia Madrasa Thursday.

The minister said governments in the past used the madrasa teachers and students politically but they did nothing for improving the madrasa education.

He called upon the alicms, madrasa teachers and students to prepare themselves to participate equally in the production sector in the 21st century, the

age of science and technology.

Citing a Hadith, the minister said Hazrat Muhammad (SM) called upon the Muslims to learn science and other subjects beyond the religious education by going out of Arab. He said there are some recommendations for improving the madrasa education in the proposed education policy.

"Few people are trying to induce corruption in the madrasa education but the government is determined to protect the sanctity of madrasa education," he said.

Maulana Borhan Ahmed presided over the meeting.

Earlier, the minister laid the foundation stone of a new building at Keshabpur Pilot Collegiate School to be constructed at a cost of Taka 75 lakh.

# Events of districts in picture



Deputy Leader of Opposition in Parliament Dr A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury inaugurating Faridul Huda Memorial Clinic in Brahmanbaria. The clinic was named after late Dr Faridul Huda, a former state minister during BNP regime. — Star photo



Dr Ronald P Black, team leader of ATDP speaking at the day long workshop on "Investment Opportunities in Agri-business in Sylhet Region" on Wednesday at Parjatan Hotel in Sylhet. — Star photo



Child artistes rendering songs at the inaugural programme of a workshop "Uchcharan-O-Abritti" organised recently by Brahmanbaria Shatiya Academy in Brahmanbaria. — Star photo



Rehana Akter MP, Jhenidah speaking as the chief guest on the occasion of Rat Killing Campaign launched on September 20 by the Agriculture Extension Department at TTDC auditorium of the district town. — Star photo