

# News snaps

## Two including UP chairman arrested

**MEHERPUR, Sept 27:** A joint team of Police, Ansar and BDR arrested two people, including a chairman, from stadium para in the town on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, the team led by Additional Police Super of Chuadanga laid siege to the rented house of Anwarul, chairman of Amdah Union Parisad (UP) and arrested him along with Mohammad Zafar. Chuadanga Police said they conducted the raid without prior notice to Meherpur police to check leaking out of the news. Zafar was wanted in at least two murder cases and an accomplice of Sabuj of the outlawed 'Sabuj Bahini' while Anwar provides shelter to Sabuj. The members of 'Sabuj Bahini' have been committing crimes in Chuadanga residing in Meherpur, police said.

## Disposal of cases being delayed

**NAOGAON, Sept 27:** Disposal of cases, caused by delay in investigation, are seriously being hampered due to lack of manpower in the district Anti-corruption office, reports UNB.

The office has got only 12 staff, including an officer, a supervisor, two assistant supervisors, a sub-assistant supervisor, an office assistant and five constables, which were said to be too inadequate to carry out day-to-day affairs. Of the staff, only four — the anti-corruption officer, the supervisor and the two assistant supervisors — are eligible for carrying out investigation works. In most cases, the investigation officers cannot complete their jobs within the stipulated time as they are supposed to do. Admitting the fact, an official said, "We have put forward a letter to the authorities concerned for recruitment of more investigation officers and they have agreed with our proposals."

## Agri-rehabilitation programme

**JOYPURHAT, Sept 27:** Local agriculture office is going to take an agriculture rehabilitation programme in a bid to recoup the output losses caused by the recent flood, reports UNB.

The office has sought Tk 46 lakh to bring some 1,250 hectares of land under the agriculture rehabilitation programme. Official sources said transplanted Aman on 6,481 hectares of land out of 71,000 in five thanas have been damaged by the recent flood. Under the proposed programme, 500 hectares of land would be brought under mustard cultivation while 300 hectares under wheat and 450 hectares under Boro cultivation. The officials said some 9,375 farmers would be benefited if the programme could be implemented successfully.

## Man with bullets arrested

**BANDARBAN, Sept 27:** A man was arrested along with 50 rounds of bullet from Jamir Karbaripara area in Alikadam thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said a group of men challenged Phai Thowai Marma, 50, for his suspicious movement in the area and recovered the SMG bullets from his possession. Phai, hailing from Madak in Thanchi thana, was handed over to police.

## Sanction for 7 educational instts

**FENI, Sept 27:** The government has sanctioned about Taka 1.50 crore for the development of seven educational institutions in the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the work of the projects includes construction of academic building at seven educational institutions. The educational institutions are Parshuram Government College, Sonagazi Government College, Feni Government Girls High School, Feni Central High School, Dharmapur Educational Estate, Ballapur High school and Ramnagar K M S High school. The work of the projects will be completed within the current fiscal year.

## Credit cheques distributed

**JHALOKATHI, Sept 27:** State Minister for Textile AKM Jahangir Hossain said here on September 22 that the government is committed to improving the standard of life of the poor and the distressed through alleviating poverty from the country, reports BSS.

Speaking at a credit distribution function at the district council auditorium as the chief guest he said the government has already undertaken a massive programme to make rural widows and divorcees self-reliant. One time grant and interest free loans is included in the programme, he added. Later on the state minister handed over credit cheques worth Taka 2,10,000 to the distressed women provided by Rural Development Board. Jhalokathi Poursabha Chairman Belayet Hossain, BRDB deputy director and local politicians were present on the occasion.

## Trader commits suicide

**HABIGANJ, Sept 27:** A small trader allegedly committed suicide on Monday by hanging himself from a palm tree at Kanaiapur village in Nabiganj thana, reports UNB.

The cause behind the suicide of Atul Kuri, 45, son of Bipin Kuri, could not be ascertained. Police sent the body to Habiganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

## Rat killing programme

**MDARIPUR, Sept 27:** A month-long Rat Killing Programme began here at the Agriculture Extension Department (AED) auditorium on September 17, reports BSS.

Shajahan Khan, MP inaugurated the programme in a function, arranged on this occasion, as the chief guest. Deputy Director of (AED) M Sayed Ali presided over the function. The chief guest in his address said, eradication of rats is a must for reducing the wastage of foodgrains and to prevent the attack from at least 30 diseases including plague, carried and spread by rats. He said, rats destroy foodgrains worth crores of taka every year causing great loss to the economy. He announced prizes for the best performance in killing the rats.

## PHED completes 96pc work

**SHARIATPUR, Sept 27:** District Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) has completed 96 per cent work under its post-flood rehabilitation and other programmes for the last fiscal year (1998-99), reports UNB.

According to the district PHED sources, the department has completed its task of providing safe water and sanitary latrine as well as testing arsenic in 1,271 tubewells. It has installed 991 deep tubewells and 131 shallow tubewells, reinstalled 269 shallow tubewells and sold 2,405 sanitary latrines in six thanas. The department also distributed 3,491 sanitary latrine free of cost under the post-flood rehabilitation programme. The executive engineer said the success in installing tubewells in 98 per cent, producing and selling latrine components 99 per cent and reinstallation of shallow tubewells 95 per cent.

## 425 marriages collapse in a yr

**BARISAL, Sept 27:** It's no longer the husbands, but the wives now stand in dominant position in terminating marriages, reports UNB.

In Barisal town, 51 per cent of the divorcees took place during the last two years came from the wives and 23 per cent from the husbands while 26 per cent separated on consent of both. Official statistics showed that 4,296 marriages were registered in different Kazi offices in the town from August 98 to August 99 and of them 425 collapsed. According to marriage registrars, today's women are more educated and more aware than ever before. They are also joining outside jobs in large number and thus trying to assert their independent power.

## Migration from villages up

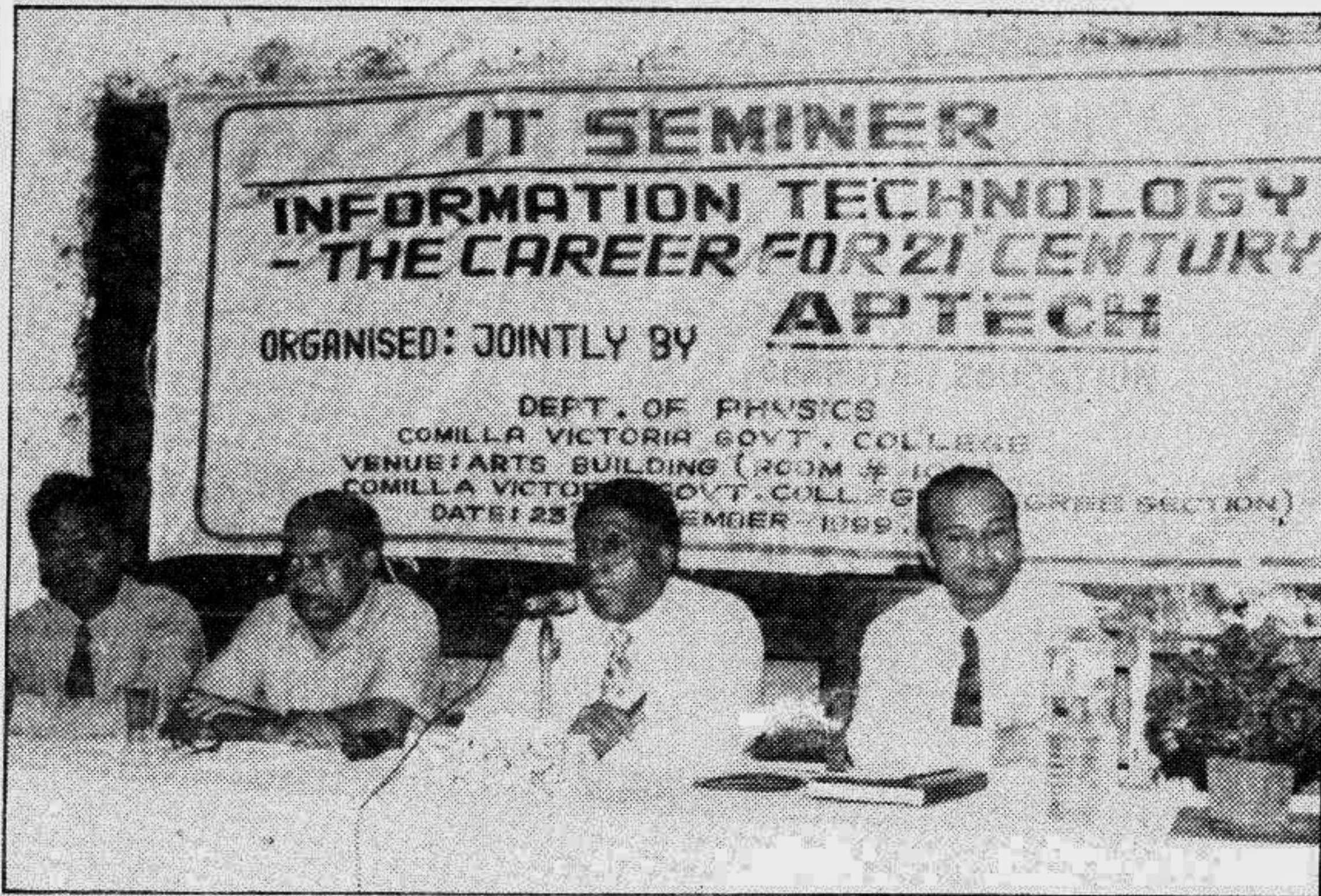
**NAOGAON, Sept 27:** Scores of poverty-stricken people from remote villages are migrating to the district town in search of works, mounting pressure on its the ever-increasing population, reports UNB.

Every day they are coming in trains and taking shelter in and around railway stations, bus terminals and vacant places of schools and colleges. Having failed to manage works, many of the migrated people are begging on the streets of the tiny town. This year the lean period, starting from Kartik, began at a time when the day labourers have no work in villages. The Food-for-Work Programme, aiming at tackling the crisis period in rural areas, has not yet started in the northern district this year.

## Nursery business booming up

**KUSHTIA, Sept 27:** With tree plantation gaining momentum in southwestern districts amid hectic government campaign, nursery has become a potential business in the region, reports UNB.

A large number of nurseries have sprung up in Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Jhenidah, Jessore, Narail, Magura, Khulna and Saitkhaty districts, creating employment opportunities for thousands of rural youths. According to an unofficial estimate, there are over 5,000 nurseries here in addition to the government ones. The estimate showed that there are about 1,200 nurseries in Jhenidah and Jessore districts while 1,000 in Phullata area of Khulna district alone. The people living in remote areas have also become interested in setting up nurseries, which requires only a small amount of capital and 5-12 acres of land. A nursery owner of the region, who also has won national award for his success in nursery, said he started his business with a capital of only Tk 5,000 in 1991.



**IT education for all:** An IT seminar on 'Information Technology - The Career for 21st Century' jointly organised by Aptech Computer Education, Comilla centre and Department of Physics, Comilla Victoria College was held on Thursday at the Arts building of the college. Speakers expressed the need of IT in every field of life. They also informed about the huge demand-supply gap of IT skilled personnel in Bangladesh and all over the world. Photo shows (L-R): Mahub Hussain, Faculty Member, Aptech Comilla centre, Fazul Karim Majumder, Vice-Principal, Comilla Victoria Government College, Lt Col (ret'd) Harunur Rashid, Managing Director, Aptech Comilla centre and Ramakanta Bhattacharjee, Area Business Head, Aptech Bangladesh Regional office. — Aptech photo

# Smugglers using Meghna for years together

**From Aroop Talukdar**

**BARISAL, Sept 27:** The Meghna, one of the big and long rivers flowing through some southern districts is being used by smugglers for years together. There are many points from where syndicated criminals and smugglers carry on smuggling and other criminal activities across the country.

Reports of smuggling and criminal activities by different politically influential or black money holders have been published in the national dailies but till date no such fruitful steps have been taken by government or other organisations to control the such unabated smuggling or criminal activities along the Meghna riverine routes.

Pirates and river dacoits let loose a reign of terror, particularly in the fishing seasons in the River Meghna and its adjoining rivers and tributaries.

Some international smuggling rackets are also using the Meghna river routes considering the routes safer.

At least 90 merchandise goods loaded trawlers had been looted by pirates and dacoits. About 18 people on board had been killed in a decade. Smugglers expanded their riverine routes from Chittagong to Ramgati, Hatia, Sandwip, Chandpur, Barisal, Bhola, Khulna Patuakhali and the capital during this period.

All legal steps taken by the concerned authorities, district administration and sometimes Bangladesh Navy have been defied.

A few months ago a report revealed, over the past several years, Chowkighata, a Meghna river bank area in Daulat Khan thana of Bhola has become a very convenient shipment point for smugglers of the southern region.

The local people call it the 'Golden Door' of smuggling.

Foreign goods of various kinds exchange hands involving several lakhs of taka here everyday.

Money and political influence have made the smugglers so powerful that no one is able to put a brake on this illegal cross-border trade, said the local people.

The same picture is prevailing every where in every points of smuggling throughout the riverine routes along the Meghna.

UNB from Manikganj reports: The incidents of piracy in rivers Padma and Jamuna are rising at an alarmingly rate as the law-enforcing agencies can hardly take action against the pirates.

Frequent reports of robberies are reported from the areas in the downstream, particularly Munshiganj, Daulatdia, Aricha, Nagarbari and Kazirhat areas.

Locals alleged that the law-enforcing agencies were not playing their due role in tracking down on the pirates. They occasionally conduct raids, but in vain. Akmal Hossain, a small trader said.

Leaders of Aricha Ghat Launch Owners' Association said passengers of the routes are gradually becoming dependent on mechanised boats for even long-route journey taking the risk of their lives.

They alleged that these unauthorised mechanised boats were carrying passengers defying government rules. But the law-enforcers are turning a blind eye to them.

When asked police said they could not keep constant vigil on the lawbreakers for lack of logistic support and necessary manpower.



**Riverbank cleaning programme:** Environment and Social Development organisation, a non-governmental organisation, observed the Clean Up the World Day on Friday in Munshiganj through a colourful programme. This was followed by the riverbank cleaning activities. About 2,500 people alongwith the local ward commissioners, elite and villagers took part in the programme. Juliet Fox, Media Representative of Friends of the Earth, Australia was present as the chief guest on the occasion.

# 310 mts of foodgrains under VGD, VGF programmes

**BANDARBAN, Sept 27:** As the seasonal food crisis has struck the hilly countryside, the government has started distributing foodgrains among the poor families in the three hill districts under its VGD and VGF programmes, reports UNB.

Officials said some 310 metric tons of foodgrains have been allocated for seven thanas, including poursabha, of Bandarban district.

To reach the foodgrains to the doorsteps of the deserving people, the government has also allocated Tk 2 lakh for meeting the transportation charges.

When sufferings of the distressed people have reduced remarkably with the introduction of the programmes, Local UP chairmen alleged that the government allocation in this regard is too inadequate to meet the requirement.

Sources at the local agriculture office said some 45,000 metric tons of foodgrains were produced in the district this year against the demand of 46,000 metric tons.

They said the district could be turned into the big bowl of paddy by bringing nearly 9,500 hectares of arable land under cultivation.

In the last fiscal, the government had allocated 1,386 mts of foodgrains for 18,115 poor and distressed people in 29 unions here.

Another report from Sherpur adds: Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief has allotted 26 thousand Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) cards to the distressed and poor people.

Officials said the government would provide grains free of cost to the distressed people and every cardholder would be given 10 kg of rice.

Officials said Union Parisad chairmen and members would prepare the list of poor and distressed people, which would be finalised by the Thana Disaster Management Committee.

Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) will supervise distribution of the grains.

Some 780 metric tons of rice has already been stored for this purpose.

Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury announced on September 3 at a public meeting in Nalibari that the number of VGF cards in the flood affected 42 unions of the district would be doubled.

Besides, the government has been providing 30 kg of rice each of the 10,056 distressed families here under the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) scheme since July 1999 and it will continue for 18 months.

# Rajshahi DIARY

## 4 cops hurt in separate incidents

**From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Sept 27:** Four police personnel were injured in two separate incidents in the city on Thursday.

A running truck loaded with sand suddenly dashed a police van behind losing its control at Rajshahi Court Dhalur intersection in the city. Three police men got injured and the police van was damaged. Biraj, the driver of the police van was admitted in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) in a critical condition and the other two were admitted in Rajshahi Police Hospital, police seized the sand-carrying truck.

Another police personnel was injured in a road accident in Kasidanga area in the city the same morning. He was admitted into the police hospital.

## Bid to kill 2 boys: man arrested

**Mathar Police arrested one person named Mushker Ali of Khojapur village in the city last Thursday on allegation of attempting to kill two boys by poisoning.**

Police said, the accused fed his neighbour Sadeque Ali's son Jahangir, 8 and nephew Joy, 2, poison mixed food with an ill-motive to kill them. When the two children fell sick they were taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. Later on a case was filed in this connection with Mathar thana. Police arrested Mushker Ali and sent him to the jail *hajaj* after producing him before the court.

## Girl commits suicide

**A young girl of about 16 years committed suicide by drinking pesticide last Thursday at Gaokanda village in Bagmara thana.**

The motive behind the suicide could not immediately be known.

## Man commits suicide

**An elderly man, Abdul Matin, 46, of Bara Bangram in the city committed suicide last Saturday by drinking poison.**

He was admitted into Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) in a critical condition, but died after some time.

## Youth killed

**A young man Asad Ali, 28, of Mougachi in Mohanpur thana died of snake bite last Friday morning.**

The snake injured him in late night. Afterwards he was taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. There he succumbed to his injuries in the next morning.

## Housewife commits suicide

**A housewife from Mohanpur died in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) on Friday last.**

Angura, 25, was admitted in the hospital on Thursday evening when she fell sick after taking pesticide.

## Rat killing drive

**State Minister for Children and Women Affairs Jimna-tunnessa Talukder inaugurated the month-long Rat Killing drive in Rajshahi last Friday. Held at the auditorium of Rajshahi Physical Education College, the function was organised by Bangladesh Agriculture Extension Department (BAED).**

Deputy Director of BAED, Rajshahi division M Rezaul Karim presided over the function. Among others, the function was addressed by Matial Banik, Additional Director of BAED and Provat Kumer Das, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education and Development) of Rajshahi as the special guests. The drive will continue upto October 15.

## Three arrested for murder

**Kankonhat police arrested three accused of a murder case last Thursday from Kankonhat. They were absconding. The arrested are Ahasan member, Fitu and Fitu's wife. They were produced before the court as sent to jail *hajaj*.**

## Mother-in-law hurt for dowry

**One woman named Shahana Begum of Shiroll Shantibag area in the city was injured by her son-in-law last Friday night.**

Police said, Ali, husband of Shahana's daughter was pressing her for dowry for a long time. At one stage of a quarrel Ali hit his mother-in-law with a sharp weapons. Shahana was admitted Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) in a critical condition.

## Seven arrested on various charges

**Rajshahi Metropolitan Police arrested seven persons last Friday on different charges.**

Police personnel of the detective branch of police nabbed three drunkard young men from Shiroll area in the city. They were handed over to Boalia thana. Rajpara police arrested one and Boalia police nabbed three people under RMP ordinance. All of them were produced before the court and sent to jail.

# Attack on CMCH teacher, wife

**CHITTAGONG, Sept 27:** Dr Nilkantha Bhattacharya, Professor of the Department of ENT, Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), and his wife Dr Krishna Bhattacharya were seriously injured when a band of armed miscreants attacked them at their residence at south Khulshi here on Friday afternoon, reports BSS.

According to a police and family sources, a group of miscreants with deadly arms numbering four pressed the calling bell and entered into their house.

The maidservant opened the door to the visitors, who impersonated themselves as medical students, and informed her housemaster about their arrival.

Dr Bhattacharya came to the drawing room. In the course of conversation, the miscreants swooped on him with an arm. The sources said adding that his wife, a gynaecologist, came to his rescue and was also hit by another armed goon.

Dr Bhattacharya was hit on the head and fell down on the floor. The miscreants left the place soon after the incident.

The seriously injured physician underwent an operation at the Holy Crescent Hospital, the doctors told the news agency while contacted. His wife Dr Krishna Bhattacharya, who received injuries in her hand was given first-aid.

The cause of the incident could not be confirmed from any quarters.

The OC of Doublemooring thana visited the place of occurrence and recovered some parts of the arms left behind by the miscreants.

**9,926 vying for 204 posts of pry teachers in Barisal**

**BARISAL, Sept 27:** A total of 9,926 applications have been filed against 204 vacant posts of assistant teacher in government primary schools in the district, reports BSS.

Of the total, 2,399 applicants are male while 7,527 applicants are female.

On an average, 49 candidates are to compete for a single post.

# 8,175 hectares in six dists under pest attack

**BARISAL, Sept 27:** Six southern districts under Barisal agriculture region fell under seasonal insects attack in the current month, official sources said, reports BSS.

According to the sources, a total of 8,175 hectares have been attacked by 'Pamri' and 'Majra' insects in the districts of Barisal, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola and Faridpur.

# Marampur UP chairman gets 10-yr RI

**COMILLA, Sept 27:** A court here has recently sentenced a UP Chairman to 10 years' Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) in a misappropriation case, reports UNB.

The court also fined Abdul Matin Patwari, Chairman of Marampur Union Parishad Tk 1.15 lakh.

According to the prosecution, Patwari as the chairman of a road construction project lifted 61,000 mts of wheat from Dharmapur Food Godown from January 31 to March 20, 1991, but he used only 42,777 mts of the grains.

Later on May 5, the Sub-assistant Engineer of the Parishad detected that 18,223 mts of wheat was embezzled by the UP chairman.

However, the case was put forward to the local Anti-corruption Bureau and after investigation the bureau filed a case against the chairman.

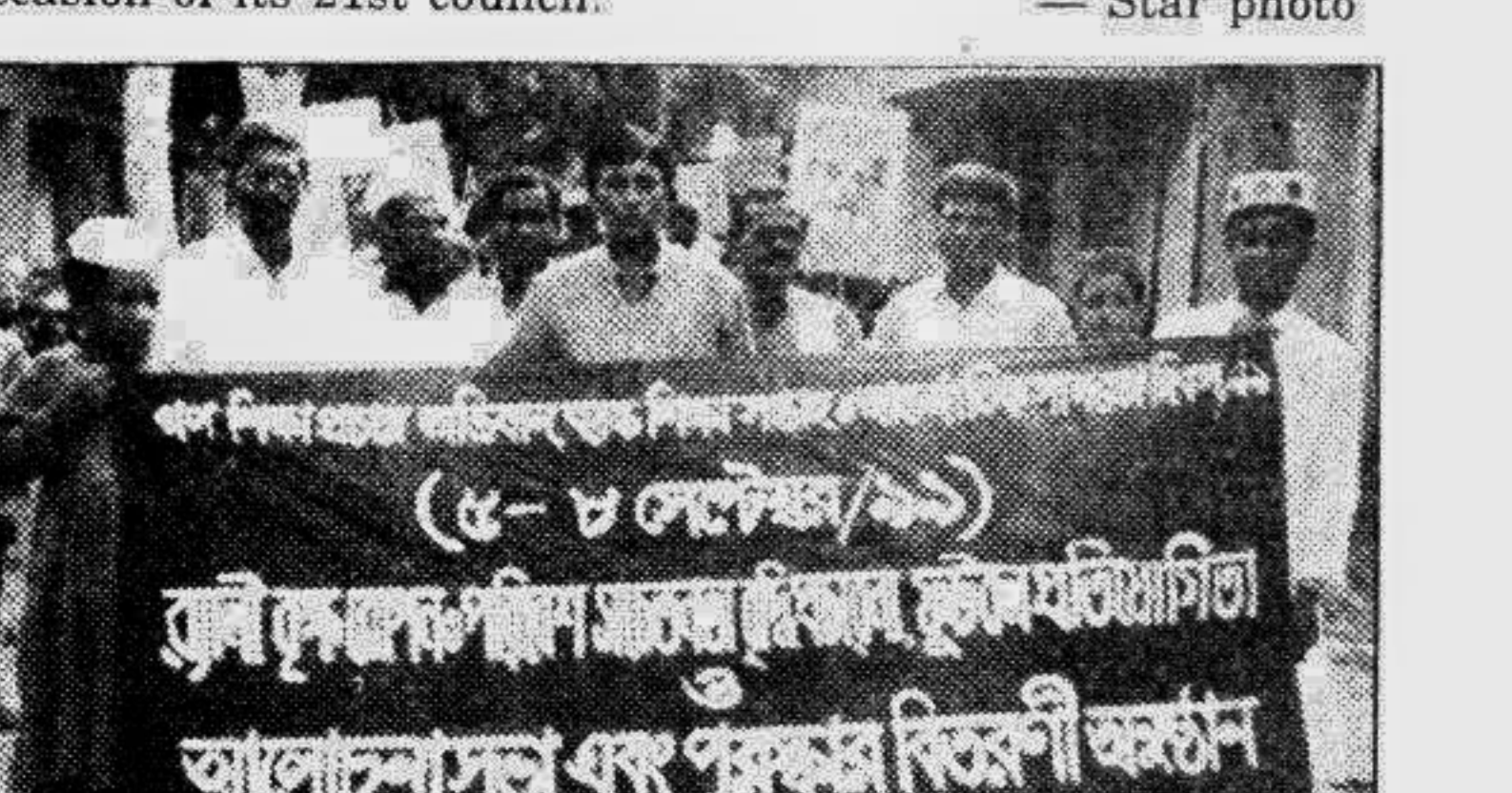
# Events of districts in picture



The River Gur has been devouring continuously village Kalinagar in Shingra thana of Natore district.—Star photo



Rajshahi University unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Union brought out a procession recently on the campus on the occasion of its 21st council. — Star photo



A rally paraded the streets of Saikupa thana in Jhenidah district recently on the occasion of International Literacy Day. — Star photo



An agricultural fair was arranged in Pabna recently by the Forest Extension Department. —Star photo