

News snaps

Upazila complex demanded

BRAHMANBARIA, Oct 17: A procession was brought out by the people of 14 villages on Tuesday to demand establishment of Ashuganj Upazila complex at Talshahar, reports BSS.

The procession started from Talshahar ended at Brahmanbaria and paraded the main roads of the town. Later, the processionists went to the office of the Deputy Commissioner and submitted a memorandum. Earlier, a meeting was held. Awami League leaders Kamruzzaman Ansary, Niaz Farid Ahmed, Prof Abu Sayeed, Idris Hasan and student leader Md Salah Uddin spoke in the meeting supporting the demand of the people of 14 villages.

Child Rights Week concludes

CHUADANGA, Oct 17: The Child Rights Week '99 was observed here in a befitting manner from September 29 to October 5, reports BSS.

In observance of the week local Shishu Academy arranged a week-long elaborate programme. The week-long programme included children rally, competitions of painting, debate, essay writing, extempore speech, dance, song and recitation for the students of local blind school, hand writing competition for the destitute children, and discussion meeting. Prizes were distributed among the best competitors. Cultural functions were also held.

Advocacy meeting

MUNSHIGANJ, Oct 17: An advocacy and planning meeting was held on Tuesday at the premises of the civil surgeon's office here to devise ways and means for implementing the National Immunisation Day (NID) successfully, reports BSS.

The NID programme is aimed at eradicating polio disease from the country by the year 2000. Fifty district and thana-level officers, public representatives, teachers, NGO representatives and newsmen took part in the deliberations. Deputy Commissioner Nurul Huq attended the meeting as the chief guest while civil surgeon Dr Dil Afroze Huq presided over.

Hasan Saeed's death condoled

BARISAL, Oct 17: Barisal Press Club and Barisal district Journalists Union have condoled the demise of eminent journalist and former AP Bureau Chief Hasan Saeed, reports BSS.

In separate messages of condolences S M Iqbal and Munir Hussain, president and secretary respectively of Barisal Press Club and G M Babar Ali and Gopal Sarker, president and general secretary respectively of journalists union expressed their deep shock at the death of Hasan Saeed. They prayed for peace of the departed soul. They conveyed their heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Wonder girl

From Our Correspondent



home or abroad. She is a regular reader of newspapers. Her handwriting is very beautiful and she can speak English fluently.

Mental Health Day observed

LALMONIRHAT, Oct 17: The World Mental Health Day was observed here on Sunday, reports BSS.

Manosika, a non-government organisation dealing with mental health programme, arranged a day-long programme on this occasion. The programme began with the hoisting of national flag at office premises. A colourful rally was brought out which paraded the main roads of the town.

Child Rights Week observed

BANDARBAN, Oct 17: Child Rights Week was observed here recently with the participation of children and guardians, reports BSS.

District information office arranged befitting programme to observe the week. A cultural function was held on the occasion. Additional Deputy Commissioner (Rev) Habibur Rahman was the chief guest and ADC (Gen) M Siddique Rahman was the special guest in the function.

Five cops suspended

JOYPOURHAT, Oct 17: Five constables were suspended and closed to the police lines for gambling at a police outpost here on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Police Super Abdul Khaleque, during a surprise visit, found the five cops gambling at the sadar police outpost. The suspended cops are Abdur Rashid, Shahjahan Ali, Abdur Razzak, Rezaul Karim and Motaleb Hossain.

Man with counterfeit notes arrested

SATKHIRA, Oct 17: One person was arrested with counterfeit currency notes of 100 taka denomination on October 12 from Satkhira Judge's Court area here, reports BSS.

According to police, the arrested person was identified as Shimul Mukherjee, 28, son of Profulla Mukherjee of village Degana in Mollahat of Bagerhat district. Police recovered 28 counterfeit currency notes of 100 taka denomination from his possession.

50 mud-built houses collapse

NAOGAON, Oct 17: At least 50 mud-built houses collapsed under the impact of heavy downpour at village Bhaktura of Shironi union of Sapahar upazila last week, local people said, reports BSS.

Several *kutcha* houses were damaged at village Tulshipara in Sapahar union. Though no person was killed, a large number of poultry birds and cattlehead perished when collapsed mud-walls fell on them.

Three terrorists with firearms held

SATKHIRA, Oct 17: Satkhira police on Sunday arrested three alleged terrorists from Babulla and Jamtola areas here and recovered one shutter gun, one pipe gun and three cartridges from their possession, reports BSS.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the areas and nabbed the terrorists. They are Shaheb Babu, 28, of village Radhanagar, Nowshar Ali, 30, of village Chowdhuria and Khokan Sardar, 30, of village Kholeskhali under Sadar upazila. Cases have been filed against them. The alleged terrorists have been forwarded to the court for trial.

Top terrorist arrested

BRAHMANBARIA, Oct 17: Police arrested Md Kajo Mia, an alleged top terrorist of the area, from village Charchartola in sadar upazila recently, reports BSS.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Ashuganj police raided the house of Md Kajo Mia, son of Md Bachchu Mia of village Charchartola of Ashuganj thana and arrested him from the same place. Kajo Mia was an enlisted terrorist, police sources said. Later, he was produced before the magistrate. The magistrate ordered to send him to the jail *hajat*.

Saadat College Teachers' Council polls

TANGAIL, Oct 17: The annual general meeting and election of the Teachers' Council of Government Saadat College was held at the college auditorium on Thursday, reports BSS.

Prof Nazim Uddin, principal of the college, presided over the meeting. Tapan Kumar Barman, Associate Professor of English Department, and Sanwar Hossain, Lecturer of Zoology, have been elected general secretary and joint secretary respectively of the Teachers' Council for the next term.

Rat killing campaign

MEHERPUR, Oct 17: National Rat Killing Campaign sponsored by Agriculture Extension Department began here last week, reports BSS.

The campaign was inaugurated by B M Elias Hossain, deputy director of Agriculture Extension Department, at a function here. Farmers, ansar and VDP members, union parishad chairman and members and NGO workers were present on the occasion. The best rat killers will be awarded prizes.

Aman crops under pest attack in Moulvibazar dist

From Rajat Kanti Goswami

MOULVIBAZAR, Oct 17: Standing Aman crops on vast areas of land are under pest attack in six thanas here.

The pests are locally known as *Pumri Poka*, *Mazra Poka*, *Leda Poka*, *Kalo Poka*. The pests have attacked the Aman paddy fields in various parts of the districts. The badly affected areas are Moulvibazar Sadar, Rajnagar and Kulaura.

About two thousand farmers at Mumtazpur village in the sadar thana arranged a *doz mahfil* for blessings of Allah for the protection of standing crops from pest attack.

Affected farmers of different areas informed that the green paddy plants had turned yellowish. The farmers said that

the spray machines distributed by the Agriculture Extension Department are too ineffective to control the situation. The farmers of the affected areas cannot afford to purchase the required quantity of pesticides which are being sold in the local markets at an exorbitant price.

Moulvibazar District Agriculture Extension Department (AED) source said a total of 104 hectares of land under Aman paddy have been affected by *Pumri* and *Mazra* insects. They claimed that Moulvibazar district AED officials had been monitoring the situation. Necessary steps have been taken in this regards, the

sources informed. In the meantime, 69 acres of land have been protected from the pest attack.

AED sources added that this year a total of one lakh three thousand hectares of land had been brought under Aman cultivation.

About 52 thousand 155 hectares are high yielding variety and 16 thousand 941 hectares are local variety. However, they claimed that the situation was now under control.

The farmers have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate measures to save the standing crops from destruction immediately.

Fire incidents up in Sylhet

SYLHET, Oct 17: Property worth crores of taka are gutted by fire in four districts of the division every year due to various reasons, including absence of fire stations in most of the thanas, reports UNB.

An unspecified number of people also receive burn injuries every year. Even many are burnt to death.

Officials said there are no fire stations in 29 of the 35 thanas in the districts of Sylhet, Habiganj, Sunamganj and Moulvibazar.

As local people demand setting up of fire stations in the 29 thanas, six such stations in four district headquarters, and

at Srimangal and Kulaura thanas have been facing problems in carrying out their duties properly.

The post of senior station officer and three out of the five posts of leader at the Sylhet Fire Station have been lying vacant since long.

The leaders play important role in extinguishing fire and facing natural calamity.

There is only one vehicles having 800-gallon capacity of water, but there is no water reservoir at the fire station.

In 1994, a plan was taken to excavate a pond to be used as water reservoir on the land owned by the fire station, but it has not yet been implemented.

It is impossible to cover 11 thanas of the district by the Sylhet Fire Station alone. As a result, property are easily gutted by fire before the firemen could reach the spot.

Besides, there was no ambulance in five other fire stations.

The vehicles to carry water in these stations almost remain inoperative as there is no arrangement for repair and maintenance.

Local people urged the authorities concerned to provide more vehicles to carry water and construct water reservoirs in a bid to save lives and properties from fire incidents in the division.

No dist judge courts in 3 hill dists

BANDARBAN, Oct 17: Judicial activities in three hill districts are seriously being hampered due to absence of District and Sessions Judge courts, reports UNB.

Despite a government decision, appointments of the District and Sessions Judges in the three hill districts are yet to be made.

Competent sources said a meeting of the Law Ministry on February 15, 1998 decided to appoint the District and Sessions Judges in Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachhari districts.

Out of 64 districts in the country, 61 districts have District and Sessions Judges. Only the three hill districts have no judges due to administrative complexities.

After signing of the CHT Peace Treaty, the government has decided to appoint such judges in the three districts to ensure constitutional rights of some 12 lakh people.

On May 5 this year, the Prime Minister's Office sent letters to the Secretaries of the Law and CHT Affairs Ministries to take necessary measures in this regard. But the outcome of the letter is yet to be known.

However, the construction of District and Sessions Judge court buildings and residences in the three districts was completed eight years back.

In absence of the judges, the judicial activities are being conducted under administrative authorities for the last two decades.

Two Additional Divisional Commissioners of Chittagong have been conducting the activities of the District and Sessions Judges of the three districts.

People feel shaky in filing case against any government decision under administrative authority.

Moreover, most of the people can not afford to go to higher

courts for appeal against the verdict of the Sessions Judge Courts of Chittagong led by the Additional Divisional Commissioners.

"If trial of a case begin once, it is uncertain when the verdict would be given," said a complainant.

A section is opposing the appointments of the District and Sessions Judges in the CHT fearing increase of in junction tendency on the administrative activities after introduction of the said courts.

Apart from these, there are no special judges in CHT to conduct women and children repression cases. Presently such cases in the three districts are referred to the Special Judges of Chittagong.

According to a competent source so far not a single woman and child repression case of CHT was settled in the Special Judge Court of Chittagong.

New non-political body floated

From Our Correspondent

Problems discussed

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 17: A meeting of Chittagong University (CU) authorities and Bangladesh Railway (BR) was held in the city on Tuesday to discuss different problems of shuttle trains, which run between the city and the university.

In the meeting, the CU authorities asked the BR authorities to increase the number of compartments and renovate the railway tracks. They also asked the BR to maintain the time schedule of the shuttle trains.

Malaria claimed 78 in 8 months in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, Oct 17: The outbreak of malaria in the hilly countryside is common, but this time it has assumed an alarming proportion in the district, claiming at least 78 people in eight months, reports UNB.

Officials said malaria killed 78 people and affected 3,502 others since January to August this year. They said bloods of 6,554 people were examined during July and August last, and of them 3,502 detected with Malaria germs.

Civil Surgeon of the district said adequate steps have been taken to combat the outbreak of the disease.

RAJSHAHI, Oct 17: Local professionals and elite have formed an organisation to create awareness among people about issues like citizens' right, national solidarity, interests and sovereignty.

The non-political organisation styled 'National Solidarity Movement' was floated recently at meeting held at city corporation conference room in the city.

Chaired by eminent economist Prof M A Hamid, former vice chancellor of Islamic University, the meeting observed that the political parties were ignoring common people's opinion while taking decisions. So the organisation will voice common people's aspiration and grievances, organisers said.

Prof Muhammad Yusuf Ali, former vice chancellor of Rajshahi University, was made convener. Advocate Abul Gaseem, president of Bangladesh Human Rights Implementation Association of Rajshahi unit, and journalist Abdul Wadood were made joint convenors.

Other members of the committee are Prof M A Hamid, ex-

vice chancellor of Islamic University; Prof Altaf Hossain, former pro vice chancellor of Rajshahi University; Advocate Mokbul Hossain, Principal of Rajshahi Law College; Prof M A Kader, former principal of Rajshahi Medical College; Prof Mokhesur Rahman, Dean, Arts Faculty of Rajshahi University; Advocate Ekramur Rasul, former general secretary of Rajshahi Bar Association; journalist Rezaul Karim Raju; Amjad Hossain, President of Rotary Club of Rajshahi unit; Prof M A Razaque, ex-general secretary of Rajshahi University Teachers Association; journalist Sardar Abdur Rahman; Advocate Enamul Huq, General Secretary of Rajshahi Bar Association; Sirajul Islam; Advocate Shamsul Alam; Prof Nazmul Islam; Engineer Fazul Huque; Prof Abdul Qader Bhuiya; Advocate Modasser Hossain; Advocate Mokbul Hossain Ranzu; journalist Abdus Sabur; and Prof Tareque Fazal.

The organisation will organise seminars and symposiums on the issues to create awareness among people.



White gold: Shrimp plays an important role in Bangladesh economy. The fries, known as *bagda*, are trapped in fine nets in the rivers and sea by thousands of poor villagers to earn a living. In the process, all sorts of tiny marine life is wiped out. The practice has been going on for years without any government concern.

— Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Jhenidah DIARY

Fake police officer held

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Oct 17: A fake police officer was arrested from a branch of Janata Bank in Shailakupa thana on October 6.

The fake police officer was identified as Mosharraf Hossain Moshah, who hails from Shailakupa town. On the day Moshah, who identified himself as a CID officer, went to Kattagaria branch of the bank and demanded money from Laxmi Kanta, an employee of the bank. The fake officer told Kanta that he had been involved in corruption. On suspicion bank officials detained him. Police later unmasked and arrested him.

Night coach robbery: 10 injured

At least 10 passengers, including a police constable, received stab injuries during a night coach robbery last week in Shailakupa thana.

Victims said robbers who were travelling in guise of passengers in a Kushtia-Dhaka route night coach overpowered the driver at about 8pm near Garaganj and asked the passengers to hand over their belongings. When some passengers tried to resist them, the robbers stabbed them. The injured cop was identified as Mafizuddin, 40. The gang of robbers, numbering eight, looted cash and valuables from the passengers. The robbers left the bus near BSCIC estate at Dhanbaria under Sadar thana. A case was filed in this connection.

Siege to PBS office

A group of agitated subscribers laid siege to Pally Bidyut Samity (PBS) office in Harinakundu thana recently for what they said issuing excess electricity bills.

The subscribers also damaged some furniture of the office, witnesses said. PBS officials could not be contacted for comment regarding 'issuance of excess electricity bills'.

Community centre opens

A community centre of a non-governmental organisation 'Unnayan Dhara' was inaugurated at village Harisakarpur under Sadar thana recently.

Shahidul Islam, KM Aktaruzzaman and UP member Fuly Begum were present on the occasion.

Outlaw arrested

A leader of outlawed of Purba Bangla Communist Party was arrested from Beparipara area in the town recently.

The outlaw was identified as Maidul Islam Rana, an associate of absconding Sabuj Bahini leader Sabuj. Police said Rana was involved in a large number of murder incidents in Meherpur and Chuadanga districts.

Int'l Elderly Day observed

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Oct 17: International Elderly Day '99 was observed here with befitting manner on October 1.

Several programmes were chalked out on the occasion. The programmes included colourful procession and discussion.

A colourful procession was brought out in the district headquarters. The procession led by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Mohammad Golam Rabbani paraded different town thoroughfares.

A discussion was held at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room. Presided over by Md Nurul Islam, Deputy Director Social Welfare Directorate, the discussion was addressed, among others, by Sardar Mohammad Mohsin, Mahamud Ali Khan, Moulana Emdadul Haque and Advocate Asraf Ali Bhuiyan.

Urban migration of flood victims from villages up

RAJSHAHI, Oct 17: Urban migration of the flood affected poor people from the rural areas has been increasing with every passing day, reports UNB.

The worst affected day labourers and marginal farmers are migrating to the towns in search of jobs as they failed to cope with the losses caused by the recent floods.

Dwelling houses and standing crops in different thanas here were fully or partially damaged by the floods this year. No government initiatives are visible for the distressed flood stricken people.

The poor people, who are also burdened by loans take from the NGOs, have been migrating to the towns looking for jobs in a desperate bid for survival. But jobs are hard to find.

Finding no other alternative, many women labourers were forced to resort to begging.

Taking advantages of the situation, a section of un-

scrupulous moneylenders are giving rice and money on loan to the hapless farmers at exorbitant interest rates.

Most frustrated were the betel leaf growers of Mohanpur thana as most of their betel leaf groves were damaged by the flood.

The growers said they need a large amount of capital for planting of betel leaf afresh. They sought government initiative to give soft loan under the flood rehabilitation programme to help fresh cultivation of betel leaf.

Banana cultivation in Baga, Mohanpur and Durgapur thanas was also badly affected by floods and the poor farmers were forced to sell under-age bananas at throwaway price in the local markets.

The flood-hit people of the district urged the government to provide them with soft loans to recoup the colossal losses caused by flood.



A colourful rally was brought out by Faridpur Lions Club recently in observance of International Lions Service Week '99 in Faridpur town.

— Star photo

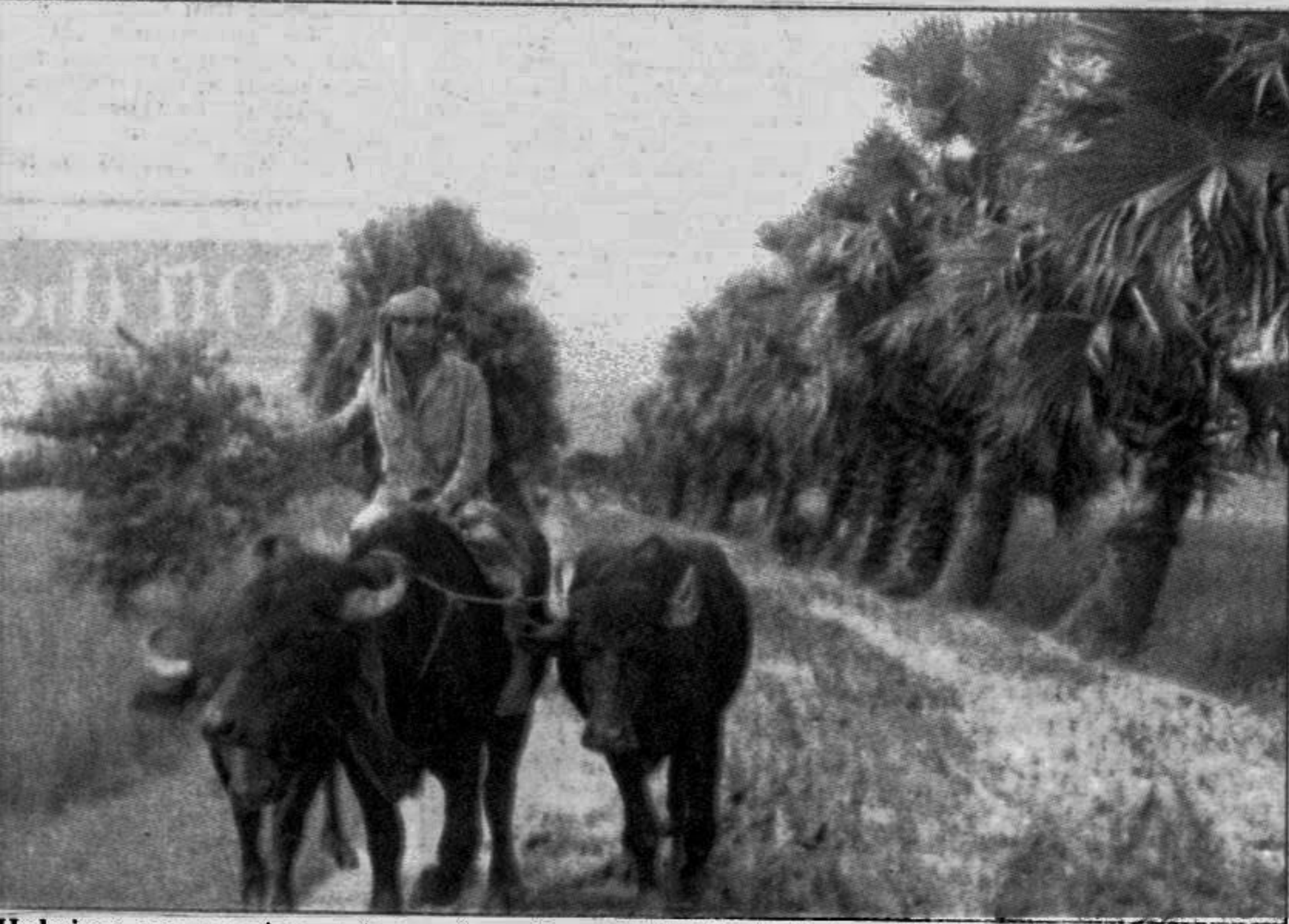


Integrated Family Development And Service Foundation distributed power tillers on October 8 among the cultivators of Nalitabari thana area in Sherpur district. The foundation distributed those under the Poverty Alleviation Programme. Foundation chairman Dr M Farid, executive director Safiullah-al-Munir, agriculture specialist Dr M H Khan, head of women and handloom director Nasrin Akhter, Nalitabari Municipality chairman Abdul Halim Ukil, peasant leader agriculturist Badiuzzaman Badsha, regional coordinator of the foundation Akteruzzaman were present on the occasion.



Kazi Md Yahyeah, a social worker and Kazi Md Zunnun, chairman of Rangpur Municipality inaugurating recently the construction work of the boundary wall of Keramatia High School in Rangpur town.

— Star photo



Helping companion: Amores, a farmer of village Durgapur in Magura sadar thana returning home with his three buffaloes. Buffalo raising in the area is popular. The animals not only help the farmers to plough the fields but also supply rich protein in form of its thick dairy. Buffalo carts are also used on the earthen village roads to carry their merchandise.

— Star photo