

News snaps

Anti-smuggling drive

RAJBARI, Nov 27: Anti smuggling Task Force has launched 74 special raids here and seized contraband goods and arrested 36 criminals during the last 10 months, reports UNB.

The Task Force sources said 56 cases were filed during the period and goods worth over Tk 8 lakh seized. The seized goods include Indian sugar, phensidyle, heroin, hemp, tarree (palm-juice), wine and rectified spirit. The Task Force launched 41 raids, seized goods worth Tk 16.34 lakh and filed 38 cases during the corresponding period of last year. Although the incident of smuggling was reduced due to anti-smuggling measures but the main smugglers remained behind the screen.

Youth with firearm held

BANDARBAN, Nov 27: A youth was arrested along with a firearm from here during the opposition sponsored daylong hartal on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said on suspicion they challenged Wazimuddin and recovered an LG and one machete from his possession. Police picked up another youth, Sohel, for his suspicious movement.

Rapist gets life term

MAGURA, Nov 27: A court here sentenced a middle aged man to life term in jail for violating the chastity of a teenage housemaid, reports UNB.

The convict was identified as Waliur Kazi, 40, son of Salek Kazi of village Sabek Khator in Shalikha thana. Court sources said Waliur raped the maid on the night of February 2, 1998. After examining the witnesses, Additional District and Sessions Judge AKM Zahir Ahmed delivered the verdict in his crowded courtroom on Thursday.

Telegraph machine out of order

BAGERHAT, Nov 27: Local T&T office is to send emergency telegraph messages through regular mails as its lone telegraph machine has remained out of order for the last 11 days, reports UNB.

The "Gentax machine" of the T&T office went out of order on Nov 16 and since then the higher authorities have been requested several times to repair it. But their requests went unheeded.

Discussion on Lila Nag

MOULVIBAZAR, Nov 27: A discussion was held here at a local insurance office on the occasion of the birth centenary of Biplobi Lila Nag, the first woman student of Dhaka University and a student leader of the then undivided India, on November 15, reports BSS.

Lila Nag was born at Rajnagar. A 51-member "Lila Nag Birth Centenary Celebration Committee" was formed in the discussion with freedom fighter Mirja Farid Ahmed Beg as convener.

Annual judicial confce

MANIKGANJ, Nov 27: The annual judicial conference was held here in the conference room of the district judge on November 20, reports BSS.

The conference was presided over by District and Sessions Judge Krishna Debnath. It was addressed, among others, by District Magistrate Sheikh Mozahar Uddin, Additional Sessions Judge ASM Jahurul Islam, Civil Surgeon Dr M Rashiduzzaman, Additional District Magistrate M Mahfuzur Rahman, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Samsuddin Ahmed, President of District Bar M Rahmat Ali, Secretary of District Bar M Meher Uddin and some senior assistant judges and magistrates.

Tk 2.90cr loan for the poor

SHARIATPUR, Nov 27: Bangladesh Rural Development Board under its Productive Employment Project (PEP) distributed Tk 2.90 crore as loan among the poor during the 1999 fiscal, reports UNB.

Poverty-stricken people, including women in six thanas, received the financial assistance. Under the programme, they were also given toilet slab and hand-driven tube-well in order to help improve environment.

Kidnapped girl rescued

SATKHIRA, Nov 27: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) rescued one kidnapped teenage school girl from Nangla border area under Debhata thana on November 21, reports BSS.

BDR personnel of 12 battalion rescued the girl while she was being trafficked into India by the traffickers. The rescued girl Karima Akhtar, 14, daughter of late Kayez Ali of village Baropoura under Morelganj thana of Begerhat district was forcibly kidnapped by the traffickers Nuru Mia, h wife Jahanara Begum, Mosharaf Hossain and Amir Howlader of Nangla border area, BDR sources said. They kidnapped the girl and took her away at Debhata area on November 17 while she was going to school. The traffickers managed to escape. One person was arrested and a case was filed with Debhata thana in this connection.

Two housewives commit suicide

MADARIPUR, Nov 27: Two young housewives allegedly committed suicide in Rajor thana on Saturday, reports UNB.

Family sources said Berula Roy, 22, of village Aururakandi killed herself by taking poison while Monwara Begum, 20, of Mazchar village was found hanging in her house. Police apprehended that family feud might be the reasons behind their suicides. Separate cases were filed.

Foodgrains sanctioned

MADARIPUR, Nov 27: The government has sanctioned 1,291 metric tons of foodgrains under Food-for-Work Programme for maintenance of rural infrastructure in four thanas here, reports UNB.

According to the district Relief and Rehabilitation Office, 337 mts of foodgrains have been allocated for Sadar thana, 316 mts for Kalikini, 263 mts for Rajor and 375 mts for Shibchar. Rural roads, culverts and educational institutions will be repaired under the programme.

Eye camp concludes

MANIKGANJ, Nov 27: A week long eye camp was concluded at Barail Hat under the auspices of Masjid Council for Community Advancement recently, reports BSS.

Advocate Abdul Wahab Khan MP was present as the chief guest on the concluding ceremony which was chaired by Al-Haj Nasir Uddin Ahmed, convenor, Masjid Council of Manikganj district unit. More than 700 eye patients including 26 operation patients were given free treatment in the camp. Spectacles, medicine, sarees, lungis and rice were also distributed free of cost among the patients on the concluding ceremony.

2,000 youths rehabilitated

RANGAMATI, Nov 27: Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) has so far rehabilitated about 2,000 unemployed youths in Rangamati and Khagrachhari districts under Cluster Village Projects, reports BSS.

BSCIC launched the project in 1992 at a cost of Taka 57 lakh. A total of 1,992 youths were given training in handloom, carpentry, cane and bamboo works, rearing of bees, batikue print and others income generating activities in 1996-97 under the project. The trained youths are being provided with necessary equipment and interest free loans for becoming self dependent.

Sugarcane crushing begins

KUSHTIA, Nov 27: Sugarcane crushing for the year 1999-2000 of Kushtia Sugar Mills located at Jagati formally opened recently after a simple ceremony and milad mahfil, reports BSS.

Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, former member of Public Service Commission, formally opened the sugarcane crushing as the chief guest. Abdus Salam, Deputy Commissioner of Kushtia, spoke on the occasion as the special guest. He said police super would take necessary steps to stop illegal gur (molasses) production in the mill zone to raise sugar production in the sugar mill. Azahar Hossain, Managing Director of Kushtia Sugar Mills Ltd, said during the crushing season 1999-2000 the sugar mill will produce 13,042 metric tons of sugar.

Two alleged dacoits arrested

SATKHIRA, Nov 27: Kalaroa thana police arrested two alleged dacoits along with three firearms from West Koata village under Sharsha thana of Jessore district recently, reports BSS.

Sources said, acting on a tip-off, police led by OC Mohammad Eshak with the help of Sharsha thana police raided the West Koata village and arrested Abdul Kalam and Rabiul Islam of the village and recovered one pipe gun, one shattur gun and one pistol with two live bullets from their possession.

Fund shortage hits Tk 17.57 cr Baral Basin Development Project

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, Nov 27: Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) here has launched a massive riverine structural development scheme — Baral Basin Development Project (BBDP) involving Taka 17,57,40,000 aimed at protecting 1.10 lakh hectares of crop land from the fury of devastating floods and to bring another 20,000 hectares of extreme drought-prone crop land under direct irrigation network in seven thanas of Natore and Rajshahi districts this financial year (1999-2000).

But the successful implementation of this ambitious project may be impeded due to shortage of fund. The govern-

ment released Tk 1.75 crore only against total Tk 17,57,40,000 in the first instalment, official sources said.

Natore WDB office sources said 195 kilometres of three river beds—Dead Baral; Musha Khan and Narod and seven flashing cum drainages — Kadirabad, Mishripura, Barupara, Chalk-Harirampur, Jamnagar, Kuthighoshpara and Godai will be excavated and their infrastructure will be renovated under this project.

Earlier, Natore WDB constructed two power-driven regulators, with a capacity of 5,000 cusec each at Charghat, the connecting point of the Padma

and the Baral and another at Alghoria, 46 km downstream of Baral; 16 drainages cum flashing sluice gates and infrastructural development of Tk 35.45 crore under the same head BBDP during the period of 1994-1998.

An expert of Natore WDB office said that water would be stored and regulated through two regulators and 10 drainage-cum-flashing sluice gates.

About 1.10 lakh hectares of crop land of Bagha, Charghat and Puthia thana of Rajshahi and Natore Sadar, Bagatipara, Baraigram and Gurudaspur thanas of Natore will be protected from the fury of floods

that damage crops worth of Tk 10 crore every year on average, the expert said. He added that about 20,000 hectares of drought affected land in these seven thanas would be brought under direct irrigation system, if the project was successfully implemented.

About 12 lakh people of these seven thanas of the two districts will be directly benefited and intensive pisciculture schemes will be launched in the 195 km long regulated water reservoirs, if this project can be implemented successfully, said the Executive Engineer of Natore WDB Rais Uddin.

But the government's alloca-

tion of Tk 1.75 crore against the project is too inadequate to implement the project successfully. The inadequate amount of money released by the government will hamper its implementation technically, experts said adding that all proposed 10 canal cum flashing inlets and river beds should be excavated and renovated within a year or two, otherwise half-excavated portion will be silted up during the next year's floodings.

Local people have urged the government as well as international development agencies to take necessary action for the implementation of the project as early as possible for the greater interest of the people.

Campaigns gain momentum in Sirajganj by polls

From Akhteruzzaman

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 27: Campaigns gain momentum in Sirajganj-7 by polls with candidates and their supporters continuing dawn to dusk electioneering.

A total of 1,74,000 voters from the constituency, comprising Shahjadpur thana, will elect their representative in the parliament.

Seven candidates are contesting in the polls to be held on December 8.

Political observers said ruling party Awami League nominee Hasibur Rahman Swapan and independent candidate Chayan Islam, who was expelled from the AL for violating party decision, over the polls, are the main contenders. Main opposition BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami have boycotted the election.

Outbreak of disease

Banana farming in Jhenidah may be hampered

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Nov 27: Banana farming here may be hampered as most of the plants have been affected by leaf burning disease this year, according to farmers.

Farmers said that at first one or two leaves are burnt and gradually all the leaves are burnt. At one stage the plant dies. Thus hundreds of banana plants have been damaged.

Mizanur Rahman, 34, a farmer of village Kabirpur in Saikupa thana of informed that he had cultivated banana

on 30 bighas of land on lease. He paid 90 thousand taka as lease money and spent another Taka two lakh for land preparation, plant purchasing, chemical fertiliser, pesticides purchasing and irrigation facilities. He was expecting at least Taka 10 lakh from the crop in current season, but in vain. The entire land was affected by leaf burning disease.

When contacted with Sahidul Alam, Thana Agriculture Officer of Saikupa, he told that leaf

burning might hamper the growth of banana severely. Alam informed he had advised the farmers like Mizanur Rahman to follow the suggestions of the Agriculture Extension Department (AED) for protection of the crop.

While this correspondent talked to the district level officials of AED, Jhenidah they could not provide exact target and achievement of banana farming in the district this season.

Tributes paid to Bhasani

KHULNA, Nov 27: Different political and socio-cultural organisations chalked out elaborate programmes here on Wednesday to mark the 23rd death anniversary of the great leader Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, reports BSS.

The programme included milad mahfil and discussion meetings on the life and political philosophy of Maulana Bhasani.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) had a discussion at its office premises here with Khulna city BNP president M Nurul Islam in the chair.

Mayor of Khulna City Corporation Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, Morshed Alam, Sharuzzaman, Mortaza, Advocate Shafiqul Alam, Mona and Kazi Mahmud Ali, among others, discussed various aspects of the life and philosophy of Bhasani.

Another discussion meeting organised by Jatiya Party (Ershad) at its office here which was presided over by Khulna city JP president and former member of the Jatiya Sangsad Alhaj Abul Hossain.

The discussion was addressed among others, by president of Khulna district JP Advocate S M Babar Ali, Akram Hossain, MM Zakir Hossain and Maulana Khelafat Hossain.

Alleged corruption in land registration

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Nov 27: The government is being deprived of several lakhs of taka as registration fees in seven thanas every year for undervaluation of land.

Such acts are being done at the time of transfer of property also.

It is alleged that the office staffers of the district registry office in collaboration with deed writers fix up the valuation less than the actual cost of property which are transferred through registered deeds.

It is alleged that half of the amount is deducted from the real value which is taken as bribe. This amount is usually distributed among the corrupt officials and deed writers.

The corrupt practice is going on violating the existing rules in this regard. The illiterate people become the worst victims.

People have urged the authorities concerned to take appropriate measure to check such corruption.

Three hurt in Feni bomb blast

From Our Correspondent

FENI, Nov 27: Three members of a family at Hasanpur under Phulgazi thana were seriously injured in a bomb explosion on Wednesday.

Housewife Karimun Nesa, 50, her daughter Salma Akhtar, 18, and son Mir Hossain, 15, were injured when a bomb exploded. The injured were rushed to hospital.

Local people said the home-made bomb was thrown from outside of the house.

No one was arrested in this connection.

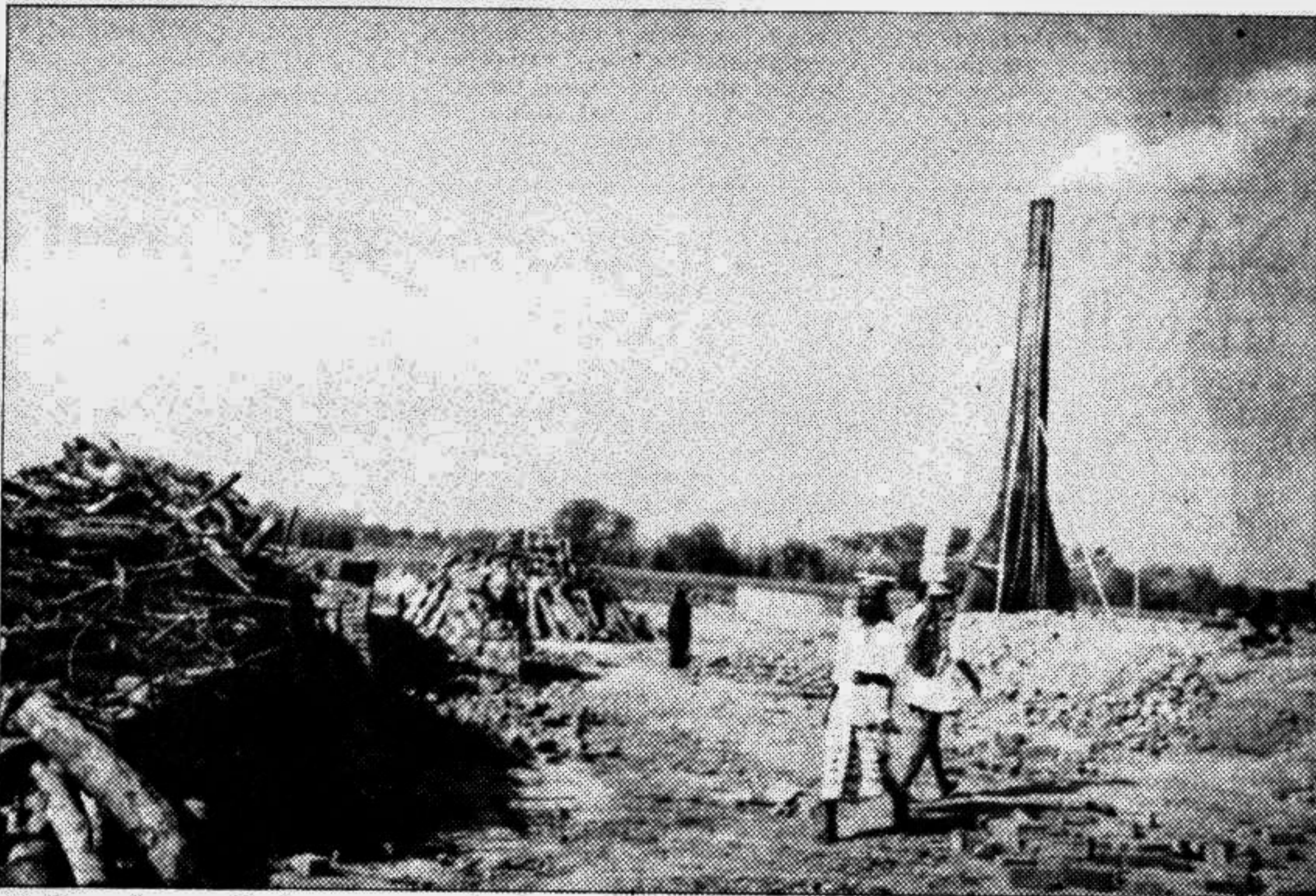
Jubo Dal leader held in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 27: A leader of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal of Shahjadpur thana was arrested in the town on Wednesday in connection with Shiko murder case.

Police arrested Habibur Rahman Faruque in connection with JCD leader Saidul Islam Shiko murder.

Shiko was shot dead on August 25 this year.



At the advent of winter season brick field owners have started accumulating fire wood by cutting trees indiscriminately defying the government ban on it. As a result the environment is being affected directly. Authorities concerned should take action against the violators of law instantly. It is to be mentioned here that in the winter season bricks are usually burnt massively all over the country. This picture has been taken recently from Kush-tia district. — Star photo

Tk 32.54 cr development project for CHT women

RANGAMATI, Nov 27: State Minister for Women and Children Affairs, Prof Zinnatun Nesa Talukdar said here on Wednesday that government has undertaken a project here at a cost of Taka 32.54 crore for the overall development of the women living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) especially for generation of their employment, reports BSS.

An area of 20 acres of land has already been acquired to implement the project at Rangapani in the town, she said while speaking as the chief guest in the inaugural session of the three-day workshop on 'strategies for grassroots women's empowerment in natural resource management in CHTs' here at the auditorium of the local tribal cultural institute.

Coordinator of Rangamati based Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Green Hill, Mong Thoai Ching presided over the opening session, jointly organised by Nepal based NGO, Himwani and Green Hill sponsored by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal.

Chairman of the task force on repatriated tribals and internal refugees rehabilitation affairs, Dipankar Talukdar, MP, Deputy Commissioner of the district, Abu Haidar Sardar, Chief of Chakma Circle, Raza Barrister

Debashish Roy and representative of ICIMOD, Anupam Bhatia attended the inaugural session as special guests.

Prof Zinnat urged the women folk of the country to work dedicatedly and unitedly with their male partners and go ahead with them to lead the country to a prestigious position in the world.

"Keeping the women folk aloof, no development of the country is possible," state minister said. She urged the people to give proper recognition to the services of women to encourage them in carrying out nation-building activities more effectively and dedicatedly.

A nation can be prosperous when the male and female members of a family work together for their own development, she said.

Prof Zinnat urged the participants of the workshop to make themselves worthy to lead the society for the betterment of the nation.

She said that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina ensured leadership of the women at every level towards empowerment of women.

A number of 60 participants, 30 from each hill district attended the workshop to put forward their suggestions for women's empowerment in managing the natural resources in CHT.



Rural women of Chapainawabganj district are engaged in making Nakshi Kantha. Such type of cottage industry needs government patronisation. The industry may flourish if the producers get loans on easy term. Such kanthas will fetch valuable forex by exporting abroad.

Boro, vegetables farming programme in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, Nov 27: The District Agriculture Department has taken up a massive programme to cultivate various crops, including Boro and vegetables, in the current season, reports UNB.

Under the regular programme, a total of 10,225 acres of land be brought under Boro paddy while 2,250 acres under maize, 1,000 acres potato, 750 acres peanut, 8,550 acres mustard, 1,335 acres various kinds of pulses and 12,000 acres under winter vegetables.

Under special programme, some 50 acres of land will be brought under hybrid variety of paddy while 25 acres under improved variety of wheat. Sitakunda variety of bean would be cultivated on both sides of 10km road.

Cultivation of potato, onion

and pulses are also included in the programmes.

The programmes also include setting up of five demonstration plots for sweet potato and seven for cultivation of fish in paddy fields.

Deputy Director of Agriculture Department MA Qudus said some 2.38 lakh acres of lands remain fallow here every year due to lack of proper initiative.

Crops worth crores of taka will be produced, if these lands at the foot of hills are brought under cultivation of fruits and vegetables, he added.

BSS from Manikganj says: Farmers in Manikganj district are expecting a bumper Aman production this season.

Agriculture officials said, over 51,000 hectares were brought under Aman cultivation this year. No news of pest

attack has been received from anywhere of the district and the climate was favourable for cultivation of Aman paddy.

The harvesting of Broad-casting Aman has already been started. T-Aman harvesting will also start soon.

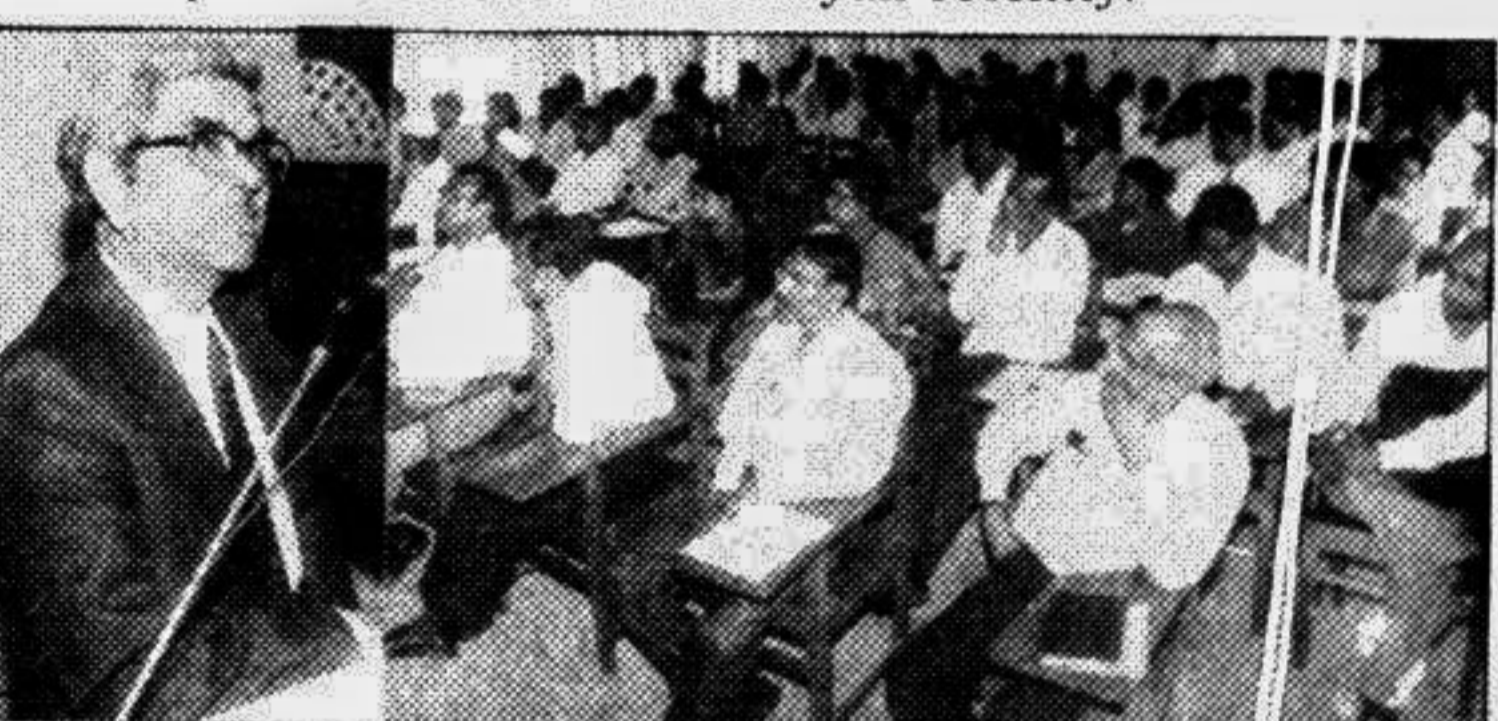
The price of rice are getting down day by day with the arrival of new Aman rice in the market.

UNB from Rajshahi says: Despite heavy downpour and water logging during the planting season, the production of Aman paddy is likely to exceed its target in Rajshahi district this year.

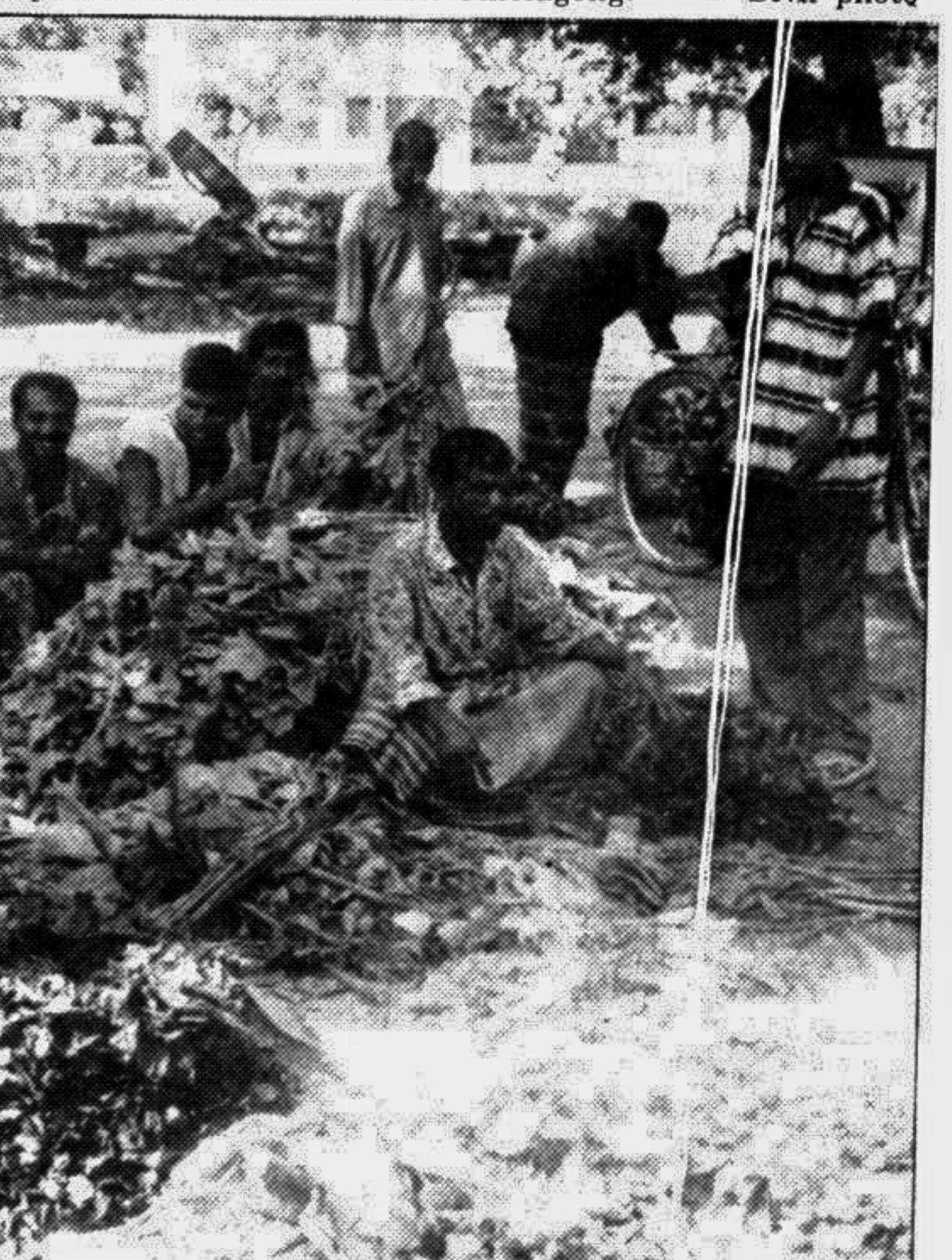
Agriculture Extension Department sources said 4,000 hectares of additional land was brought under Aman cultivation in the district with a revised target to produce 90,000 metric tons of Aman paddy.



Newly elected office-bearers of Daudkandi Students Welfare Association greeting the chief patron of the association Maj Gen (Retd) M S A Bhuiyan recently.



Scientist Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam addressing the inaugural session of the 12th Mathematics Conference on November 18 at Chittagong University Mathematical and Physical Research Centre in Chittagong. — Star photo



Winter vegetables have flooded the markets of Jamalpur, but those ar beyond the reach of common people due to sky high price. — Star photo