

30 IPM schools being set up in Sherpur

SHERPUR, Jan 26: Thirty field-level schools on integrated pest management (IPM) are being set up in the district to familiarise the farmers with modern production methods, reports UNB.

The schools, split into three categories, will impart training to the participants on proper use of chemical fertiliser, modern and developed cultivation methods and maintenance of land fertility.

Official sources said identification of helpful insects, its characteristics and conservation process, detection and prevention of sinister insects and their elimination by natural process like trap and netting will be highlighted in the schools.

They said agriculture officials will operate the first category of the schools while trained farmers give instructions in the schools of the second category. Students of different educational institutions will give instructions in the schools of the third category.

Of the schools, 21 are being set up in five thanas under the direct supervision and participation of agriculture officials.

Modern methods of Boro cultivation will be taught in four schools in Sadar and six schools in Jhendigati thanas while that of both Boro and vegetable cultivation in four schools in Nakla, six in Nalitabari and one in Sriwardi thanas.

Six more schools are being set up in Sadar and Nakla thanas, where trained farmers will teach their novice colleagues.

A special IPM school is being set up at Baneswardi High School in Nakla where students will impart training.

Meanwhile, three farming schools have been set up in Sriwardi thana under a paddy diversification training programme, the officials said.



When will it stop? Illegal logging is rampant throughout the country. At many places like Chittagong Hill Tracts influential section of people are joined by cash-hardened farmers to chop down valuable trees. The practice is almost unhampered as it also generates cash for the law enforcers. — Star photo by Morshed Ali Khan

No fire station at 31 thanas in Barisal

BARISAL, Jan 26: Thirty-one thanas, out of 38, in six districts of Barisal division have no fire stations though frequent fire incidents take place in these thanas every year, reports UNB.

Fire Brigade sources said 29 people were killed and 679 injured, and property worth of Tk 1.29 crore were gutted in 192 fire incidents in Barisal, Jhalakathi, Bhola and Pirojpur districts last year.

Besides, over 2,000 cattle-head and poultry birds were killed in the incidents during the period.

Of the fire incidents, 24 people were killed and 360 injured only in Bhola in 30 fire incidents.

Two persons were killed and property worth of Tk 80 lakh were charred in 90 fire incidents in Barisal district.

Two people were killed and property worth of Tk 15 lakh were damaged in 63 fire incidents in Jhalakathi while a man was killed and property worth about Tk 22 lakh was gutted in Pirojpur.

But, people claimed the extent of damage were more than the official estimate. There were no reports of fire incidents in the remote areas where fire fighters could not reach.

Rivers surround the division. But, there is only one river fire unit, which has no modern equipment.

The fire station in the divisional headquarters also lacks necessary modern equipment and manpower.

It has only 37 employees and officers while no appointment was made in last 34 years. Two posts of officer are lying vacant for long.

Civil Defence sources said that a decision was taken to set up fire stations in Banaripara, Gournadi, Bakerganj, Nazirpur and Kaulkhali thana. Construction of fire stations in Banaripara and Gournadi is nearing completion.

Private medical college in Pabna

PABNA, Jan 26: In an effort to raise the number of physicians in the country, a private medical college has been set up here at a cost of Tk 70 crore, reports UNB.

The new college, "Amban M Monsoor Ali Medical and Dental College," will begin its academic session from April this year.

Principal of the college Dr Mostafa Kamal told that it is a joint-venture initiative by Amban University of Bangladesh and Houston University of America. It will take 10 years to complete the infrastructure works of the college.

Until then, the medical college named after one of the four national leaders who was killed in Dhaka Central Jail in 1975, will be run in a rented house in the town.

About 100-acre land alongside Pabna-Ishwardi highway for the college has been selected.

A five-member government team, led by principal of Dinajpur Medical College, visited the town here recently and exchanged views with local administration and people of all strata in this regard.

The college, having modern academic facilities of international standard, will be an affiliate institute of Rajshahi University.

The initiative for establishing the college was taken following the assurance of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a public meeting here that the government will extend all-out cooperation if steps taken for setting up of a private medical college.

Earlier, an abortive attempt was made to run a private medical college on the campus of Mental Hospital here during former President Ziaur Rahman. It was closed within a year.

With the establishment of the new medical college, the long-drawn dream of the local people has come true.

BCL-JCD clash in Sirajganj: Five injured

From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, Jan 26: The activities of ruling Awami League-backed BCL and main opposition BNP-backed JCD locked in a clash on Monday at Ullapara thana headquarters, leaving at least five people injured.

Witnesses said a group of BCL activists from a procession attacked BNP office and damaged its furniture at ten in the morning, triggering the clash.

Earlier, JCD activists beat up a BCL leader of Ullapara Akbar Ali Government Degree College unit. Babul Sarker, in Ullapara Thana Parishad premises on Sunday.

Wheat, rice distributed in Feni

From Our Correspondent
FENI, Jan 26: A total of 62 tons of wheat and rice were distributed among 5,760 poor people in the district recently.

According to district Relief and Rehabilitation office, the wheat and rice were distributed among the poor in 44 unions and municipality area in the district. Each person received 5kg rice and 5kg wheat.

Union Parishad members and municipality ward commissioners distributed the food grains.

9,886 TB, leprosy patients treated under MTLCP

From Our Correspondent
MYMENSINGH, Jan 26: A total of 9,886 TB and leprosy patients were treated from 1993 to 1999 under Mymensingh Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Project (MTLCP) in Mymensingh and Kishoreganj districts.

Under the project, 8,344 TB and 1,542 leprosy patients were treated in different clinics in Bhaluka, Gafargaon, Trishal, Gouripur, Muktagachha, Phulpur, Nandail, Phulbaria, Ishwarganj, Haluaghat, Drebraura and Sadar thana of Mymensingh district and Ash-gram, Bajitpur, Bhairab, Hossainpur, Itna, Karimganj, Tariak, Katiadi, Mithaman, Nikli, Kulkachar, Pakunadia and Sadar thana of Kishoreganj district.

Of the registered TB patients of Mymensingh, 68 were treated in 1994, 364 in 1995, 803 in 1996, 1,075 in 1997, 1,314 in 1998 and 793 in 1999 (up to June), according to official sources.

Official sources said 208 leprosy patients were treated in 1993, 236 in 1994, 125 in 1995, 152 in 1996, 158 in 1997, 149 in 1998 and 102 in 1999 in the district.

Of the registered TB patients in Kishoreganj, 309 were treated in 1996, 978 in 1997, 1,676 in 1998 and 964 in 1999, sources said.

In Kishoreganj, 22 leprosy patients were treated in 1994, 49 in 1995, 97 in 1996, 71 in 1997, 84 in 1998 and 89 in 1999.

The MTLCP, a concern of Damien Foundation, a non-denominational organisation of Belgium, has been working to remove the diseases from the project area since 1993.

The Damien Foundation, established in 1964, began its activities in the country through the Jalchhatra Hospital in Madhupur thana of Tangail district in 1972.

The foundation was founded by Belgian national Damien who dedicated his life for the welfare of the leprosy patients at Molokai, an island of the Hawaiian archipelago in the second half of the nineteenth century. People of Belgium are the main donors of the foundation.

Later the foundation launched its activities in Rajshahi in 1995 and Tangail in 1996. The foundation provides treatment facilities free of cost to tuberculosis and leprosy.

According to report of the foundation, about 30,000 persons are suffering from leprosy in the country.

4th Biennial Council of IBS Alumni Association

From RU Correspondent
RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Jan 26: The fourth biennial council of Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS) Alumni Association will be held on January 28 at the institute gallery.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) chairman Prof A T M Johurul Haq is expected to inaugurate in council as the chief guest.

Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor Prof Sayeedur Rahman Khan, Pro-VC Prof Muhammad Wazed Ali and IBS Director Prof P K Mitra will be the special guests.

The council will be presided over by the association president Prof Mokhlesur Rahman who is also the Dean of the Arts faculty.

The council will be divided into some sessions such as inaugural sessions, seminar, general meeting, election and cultural programme.

The seminar will be attended by a large number of economists and scholars. The year's seminar will be on 'The Impact of World Trade Organisation (WTO) on Bangladesh Economy.'

Prof Solaiman Mondal and Prof M A Hamid, ex-VC of Islamic University (IU) of Economics Department, Prof Golam Rabbani of Finance and Banking Department and S M Khalilur Rahman of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) will present four separate keynote papers at the seminar.

News snaps

Valuables looted
COMMILA, Jan 26: Armed bandits broke into a house at south Bagchagan in the town and looted valuables worth over Tk 2 lakh early Monday, reports UNB.

Police said the robbers entered into the house of Dr Muhammad Kashem breaking its grill and made off with the booty at gunpoint. The looted valuables included 30 tolas of gold ornaments, a VCP set, two cameras and eight wristwatches. A case was filed.

Boro farming programme
NETRAKONA, Jan 26: Over 5,85,000 hectares of land have been brought under Boro cultivation in five districts of Mymensingh agriculture zone, fixing the output target at 16,11,461 mts, reports UNB.

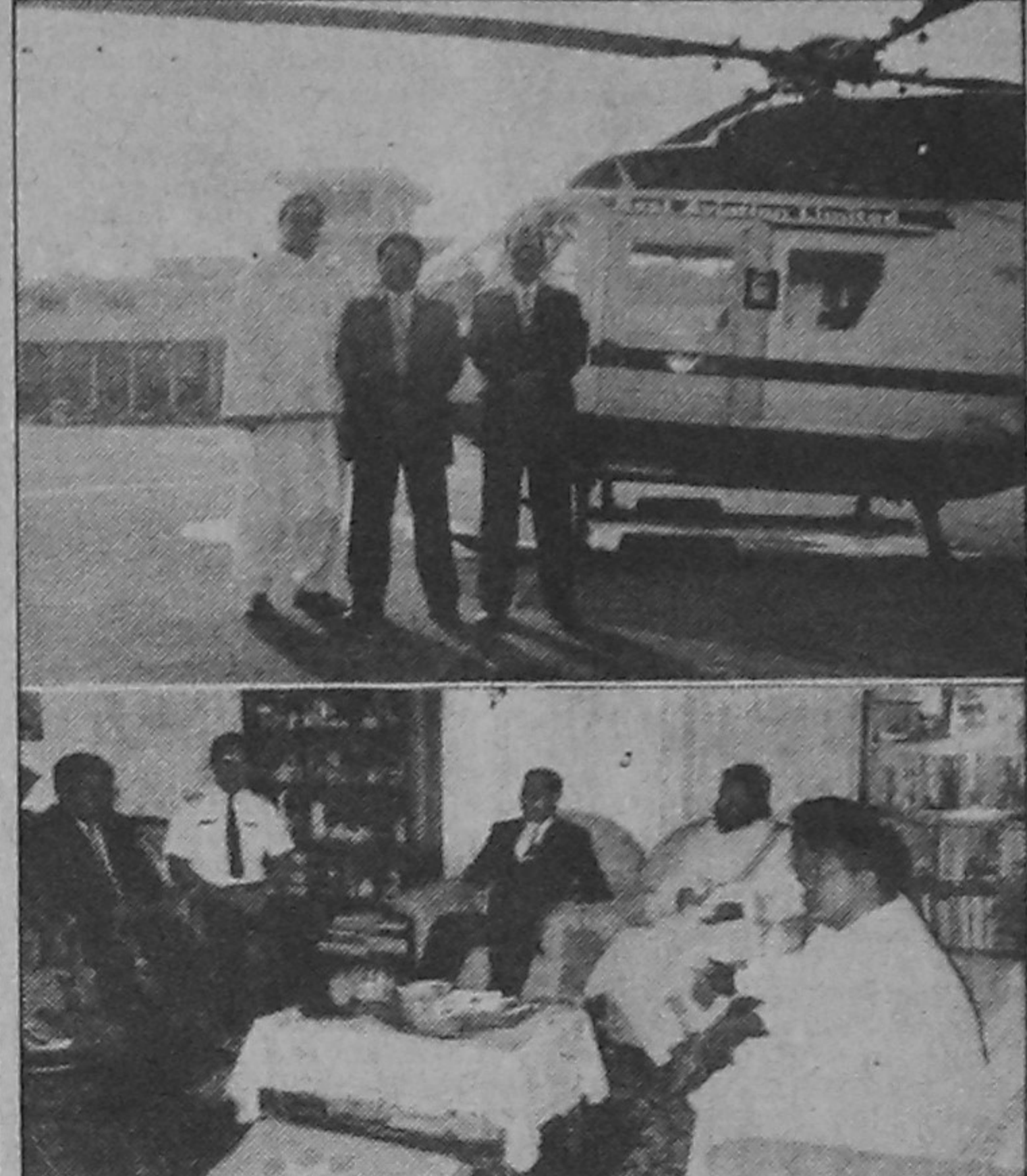
District-wise breakup of the lands: Netrakona-1,26,910 hectares, Mymensingh-1,64,850, Jamalpur-90,700, Sherpur-59,970 and Kishoreganj-1,43,200 hectares. Apart from Bangladesh Krishi Bank, commercial banks too are disbursing farm credit among farmers to make the programme a success.

Rabi crops cultivation
MANIKGANJ, Jan 26: Some 92,625 acres of land have been brought under Rabi crop cultivation with a production target of 1,03,931 mts, reports UNB.

Crop-wise breakup of the lands: Wheat-37,050 acres, maize-1,482, Potato-5,681, sweet potato-1,606 mustard-13,585, pulses-29,815, onion-9,880, garlic-247, coriander-247, pepper-741 and winter vegetables-1853 acres.

Sanction for road construction
RANGAMATI, Jan 26: Government has sanctioned Tk one crore for the construction of Kaokhali-Ghulachhari road, reports UNB.

Local Government Engineering Department will implement the project. Meanwhile, works on the project have begun and are expected to be completed by two and a half months.



The officials of Best Aviation Limited, the first private entrepreneur introducing helicopter service throughout the country paid a goodwill visit to Rajshahi recently. Its Managing Director Hadiuzzaman briefed the local journalists at a press conference about his mission. Pilot of the helicopter Chan Kanok (a Thai national) and co-pilot Wing Commander (Retd) Mijanur Rahman were also present in the conference. Later on the journalists went to Rajshahi Airport to have a glimpse of the helicopter. — Star photo

Surplus paddy produced in Barisal
BARISAL, Jan 26: Barisal division is now food surplus area of the country after 29 years, reports BSS.

According to agriculture extension office sources, at least 3,09,302 metric tons surplus of paddy were produced in this division last year. A total of 8,20,753 hectares were brought under Aus, Boro and Aman paddy cultivation in six southern districts of this division last year. On the other hand, 76,000 hectares were brought under irrigation project through pumps during cultivation period.

Free book distribution
PIROJPUR, Jan 26: Government has decided to distribute 1,06,262 sets of textbooks free among primary school students, reports UNB.

Some 1.5 lakh students of 606 government and 318 registered primary schools in six thanas will get the textbooks. Thana-wise breakup of the books: Nazirpur 17,500 sets, Sadar 22,700, Bhandaria 16,200, Kaokhali 6,500, Mathbaria 23,262 and Nesarabad 20,100 sets. The book distribution programme has already begun in the areas and will continue till February.

20 students get award
TANGAIL, Jan 26: A total of 20 local students of class four and class nine were awarded scholarship and certificates by Gopalpur Public Library and Club recently, reports BSS.

Tauhidur Rahman, TNO, Gopalpur handed over the scholarships and certificates at a simple ceremony held in the auditorium of the library.

Uplift work progressing
KHULNA, Jan 26: A massive development programme under food for work in all nine upazilas here began next week, an official source said here, reports BSS.

The programme included 152 infrastructure development projects. The programme will be implemented with 1,690 tons of wheat allotted under Food for Work Programme. Meanwhile, construction of academic building of four non-government colleges in Bagerhat district is nearing completion. The Facilities Department of the Ministry of Education has been implementing these projects at a cost of Taka 1.65 crore. The colleges are Begum Fazilatunnessa Mujib Mohila College in Fakirhat Upazila, Digraji College in Mongla, Shaheed Sheikh Abu Naser College in Kachua upazila and Sundarban Mohila College in Rampal upazila.

Loan distribution programme
NETRAKONA, Jan 26: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has taken up a programme to disburse Tk 19.70 crore farm loan in 10 thanas here in the current fiscal, reports UNB.

BKB officials said farmers from 86 unions will receive the loan for undertaking small but income-generating programmes like crop farming, cattle rearing, irrigation and poultry farming. The bank has started disbursing the loan through its 19 branches.

Abu Sayeed's challenge to Khaleda Zia
SHANTHA, Pabna, Jan 26: State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed has asked the opposition political parties to give people's support in favour of hartal without creating panic among them, reports BSS.

Throwing a challenge to Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia, Prof Sayeed said it will be proved whether the people actually favour destructive hartals if the opposition declares that it will not create terror, kill anyone, destroy any vehicle and hurl bombs at the innocent people.

The state minister for information was addressing a function here on January 22 organised on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the 100-metre Shaheed Muktijoddah Smriti Bridge on Ramkamtapur-Dhulair feeder road.

LGED will construct the bridge at cost of Taka 78 lakh.

Prof Sayeed alleged that the opposition political parties were making people hostage in the hands of a few terrorists in the pretext of hartals. "Even some of the conscious BNP leaders have no confidence in hartal," he observed.

He said the leaders, who have been working together to restore the spirit of 1947, did not believe in the independence of the country.

Thousands affected with arsenic related diseases in Jamalpur
From Our Correspondent
JAMALPUR, Jan 26: About twelve thousand people in the district have been affected with arsenic related diseases.

The affected areas are Kendua, Mesta, Shahabpur, Sharipur, Kamrabad, Doail, Satpota, Pogaldigha, Pighna and Bhatara unions and municipality area.

At least 300 tubewells have been sealed in the area as the waters of the tubewells contain arsenic beyond permissible limit, official sources said.

Sources said Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE), Jamalpur the office lacks adequate equipment and expertise to detect arsenic contamination in tubewells waters.

Saplings dying due to lack of maintenance

From Our Correspondent
BRAHMANBARIA, Jan 26: Hundreds of saplings are dying every year in the district only due to lack of proper maintenance.

On the occasion of tree plantation drive every year a huge number of saplings are planted by various government offices, non-governmental organisations and voluntary organisations along the roads and highways, embankments and other places. But the saplings die within very short time because on one takes care of these newly planted saplings.

It is alleged that some organisations only plant saplings during rainy season, but do not take care of the plants. Local people said cattle damage most of plants. They also said unknown diseases attack the plants.

Another report adds: The unknown diseases are also attacking trees. The diseases attack roots of a tree and after three or five months cause its death.

When contacted Sheikh Md Nurul Islam, a farmer of village Shahjadapur of Sarail thana of the district, said five mango trees, 20 guava trees and three jack-fruit trees of his gardens during the last ten months.

When contacted local forest officer said many saplings and trees die because of floods.

Local people also alleged some unscrupulous persons kill roadside trees by using poisonous chemicals. When the trees start dying the unscrupulous men illegally cut the trees and sell to timber traders.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to take proper steps to protect the trees.

Residence of poet Kazi Kader Nawaz remains neglected

From Hossain Seraj
shidabad district in India. After the partition in 1947 he came to the then East Pakistan and joined Dinajpur Government High School as headmaster. After retirement from the government service he also served a high school in Sreepur thana as headmaster.

The first poetical work of Kader Nawaz, who had also proficiency in English, French and Sanskrit, Manral was published from Calcutta.

'Nil Kumadi' is his another poetical work which was published from Dinajpur. 'Duti Pakhi Duti Teary' and 'Utala Sandha' are two of his published novels. 'Moruchandrika' and 'Dashhu Lalmoan' are two of his short stories.

MAGURA, Jan 26: The residence and grave of renowned poet Kazi Kader Nawaz have remained unmarked and totally disregarded. Homeless people in the area have turned the dilapidated 'palatial' building into their abodes. No one of late Nawaz's family lives in village Muzdia under Sreepur thana in the district.

The poet of some popular poems like 'Ostader Kadar' and 'Harano Tupi' died at Jessore General Hospital on January 3, 1983. Later the poet was laid to rest at his village home at Muzdia. After his retirement from teaching job in 1966 he started permanently living at the village.

The poet was born in 1909 at village Talebpur under Mur-



(L-R): Kazi Kader Nawaz and his residence which is now in dilapidated condition at village Muzdia in Sreepur thana of Magura district. — Star photo



Visitors viewing a photo exhibition of journalist Hossain Seraj held recently at Magura Press Club. — Star photo