

Stoppage of power production in Baghabari 71-mw plant

From Akhtaruzzaman Bablu

SIRAJGANJ, Feb 6: Power production in Baghabari 71-megawatt gas turbine power plant has come to a halt due to mechanical problem, causing frequent outage in the northern region.

Officials stopped production on January 13 as mechanical problem with a turbine blade was detected.

Gas could not be supplied to the plant due to the problem.

The power plant sources said it would not be possible to produce power in the next four months.

The power plant was established in 1999 at Baghabari under Sirajganj district. The plant had been using diesel to generate electricity as the northern region had no gas facility.

However, after commissioning of Bangabandhu Jamuna

Bridge gas is being supplied to the region.

On the other hand, gas could not be supplied also to mechanical problem, causing frequent outage in the northern region.

PDB (Power Development Board) is supplying diesel to the plant to produce electricity.

PDB will supply diesel to the plant till March 25 under an agreement. The northern region faces outage between 15 megawatt and 20 megawatt during peak hour.

Local Agriculture Extension Department officials said irrigation is being hampered in the region because of outage. They said IRR-Boro cultivation on nearly 40 hectares of land in 16 districts under Rajshahi division would face severe hindrance if the problem continues.



In the coastal areas many people catch crabs to earn living. The boys in the photograph, taken recently in Cox's Bazar, take their catches to markets. — Star photo

Crimes up in Madaripur

MADARIPUR, Feb 6: Law and order situation in the district continues to deteriorate, triggering widespread public concern, reports UNB.

Five cases of murders, two of dacoities, one of rape and three of clashes were filed with different police stations of the district in last one month, sources said.

Police records showed that 10 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of Awami League at Char Laxmipur village in Sadar thana on January 20. Both the groups blasted over two hundred homemade bombs.

A freedom fighter and his brother were critically injured in an armed attack at Laxmipur village in Kalkini thana on January 15.

Armed terrorists abducted and killed a teenage girl after rape at Kulchhari village in Sadar thana on January 11, while two brothers were killed at Zazira village in Kalkini thana on January 7.

A daring dacoity was committed at the BRAC office in Rajshahi thana headquarters on January 2.

A local terror abducted a girl from Tajpur village in Shibchar thana and raped her on December 28.

Terrorists stabbed a man at Laxmiganj village in Sadar thana in his sleep on December 27.

A commissioner of Madaripur parasava was stabbed by terrorists on December 26, according to police records.

Good production of wheat in Rajshahi district likely

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Feb 6: Good production of wheat is being expected in Rajshahi district this year.

Agriculture Extension Department (AED) officials of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) have expressed this optimism.

The weather has been favourable enough since the beginning of the season till now and wheat saplings are growing well," said AED officials.

AED officials expressed this optimism despite failure in achieving the target of cultivated land. A target was fixed to bring 40,000 hectares of land under wheat cultivation in the district during the current season but wheat was cultivated on only 25,000 hectares of land.

In the previous season, wheat was cultivated on 35,100 hectares of land against the target of 40,842 hectares.

A total of 82.38 tons of wheat is being expected to be produced this year in the district, AED sources said.

Thana-wise break up of land coverage is as follows: 3,500 hectares against the target of 4,500 hectares in Poba thana, 6,100 hectares against the target of 5,500 hectares in Bagmara thana, 4,275 hectares of land against the target of 5,500 hectares in Durgapur thana, 1,200 hectares against the target of 2,000 hectares of land in Tanore thana, 1,950 hectares against the target of 3,500 hectares in Mohanpur thana, 4,420 hectares against the target of 4,500 hectares of land in Puthia thana, 3,500 hectares of land against the target of 3,500 hectares in Godagari thana, 3,630 hectares of land against the target of 3,700 hectares in Charchat thana, and 6,400 hectares of land against the target of 7,000 hectares in Bagha thana.

UNB from Madaripur says: Excessive moisture in soil, lack of irrigation facilities and high price of fertilisers appear to obscure the prospect of wheat cultivation in the district this season.

Most farmers could not yet prepare their lands for wheat cultivation due to excessive moisture caused by late monsoon, leaving nearly 30 per cent of the targeted land uncultivated.

Apart from unfavourable weather, the growers have another concern; lack of capital. Many farmers alleged that this year they did not get fair price of vegetables.

Lack of irrigation facilities and price hike of fertiliser by Tk two per kg were among other reasons that badly affected the farmer's efforts of wheat cultivation.

Local agriculture office had undertaken a programme to bring some 8,500 hectares of land in four thanas of the district under wheat cultivation this season.

No class held in Edward College Social Sc Deptt in two yrs!

PABNA, Feb 6: Relieve it or not! No class was held in Social Science Department in Edward University College here for the last two years, reports UNB.

College sources said at present there are more than 1,500 students in this department and admission of students is being held every year. But the classes could not be taken due to lack of teachers.

The authorities said there has been only one teacher against 7 posts. The lone teacher could not take classes as he spent most of his time to complete his departmental works as head.

Departmental Head Abdus Sattar who has been a lone teacher since March 29, 1998, said the students of the department have to leave the college almost every day without having any classes.

He said according to the student-teacher ratio, at least 12 teachers are needed in the department. But there is no teacher except the head of the department.

The college authorities have repeatedly requested the concerned authorities to fill up the vacant posts but no step was taken.

News snaps

Body of student recovered
SATHKHIRA, Feb 6: The body of a college student was recovered from in front of Primary Training Institute here on Thursday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Shanker Ghosh, 25, a degree 2nd year student of Sathkhira Government College. The cause behind the killing could not be known. The body was sent to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

Sherpur Bar Assoc poll
SHERPUR, Feb 6: Election to the district Bar Association will be held here on February 17, reports UNB.

A total of 135 members will cast their votes to elect a 16-member executive committee of the Bar for the year 2000-2001.

Work progressing
BAGERHAT, Feb 6: Work on 54 development projects is progressing fast in nine thanas, reports UNB.

The projects undertaken under Annual Development Programme (ADP) included development of rural roads, construction and reconstruction of 25 wooden bridges, renovation of various service-related organisations. Work on the projects is expected to be completed by current fiscal year.

48 uplift projects undertaken
SHERPUR, Feb 6: Sherpur Municipality has taken up 48 projects in 1999-2000 fiscal year involving Tk 52 lakh, reports UNB.

The projects included development of roads, construction of bridges and culverts, bazaar development and shed and drain construction. Work on the projects is expected to be completed within three months.

Outlaw arrested
CHUADANGA, Feb 6: Police arrested an outlawed party leader from the village of Boalia in Alamdanga thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

The arrested was identified as Tela alias Azad Ali, a leader of Purba Banglar Communist Party. Acting on a tip off, police raided the village and arrested him. A case was filed.

Tk 23 lakh dev projects
MADARIPUR, Feb 6: Five projects have been undertaken by the District Council under the Annual Development Programme (ADP) for improving communication facilities, reports UNB.

The projects include construction of road, footbridge, RCC footbridge, renovation of a public library and construction of ghat of a pond. Officials said work on the projects will be completed within next month at a cost of Tk 23 lakh.

Mymensingh Press Club body
MYMENSINGH, Feb 6: A 15-member new executive committee of Mymensingh Press Club has been elected with AZ Imamuddin Mukta and Prof Abul Kashem as vice presidents and Mosharruf Hussain as general secretary (uncontested) for the year 2000, reports BSS.

The other office bearers are — Joint Secretary Mozammel Haque, Treasurer — Aminul Haque Jahangir, Sectional Secretaries — M A Motaleb, Bazlur Rahman, Abdul Wadud Sarker and Shahjahan Siraji. The elected 7 members are: Mr Ataul Karim Khokon, Mr Anwarul Hasan Rumi, Prof Abdul Kadir Khan, Mir Golam Mostafa, Al-haj Bazlur Rahman, Prof Lutfor Rahman Khan and Sultan Uddin Khan.

AED training course
MANIKGANJ, Feb 6: A day long training organised by Agriculture Extension Department (AED) was held here in Saturia Thana Parishad auditorium recently, reports BSS.

A total of 60 male and female farmers of Saturia thana took part in the training.

New college academic bldg
CHUADANGA, Feb 6: The construction of the new academic building of Chuadanga Government College (CGC) has just been completed, reports BSS.

The three-storeyed building has been constructed at a total cost of Taka 54.20 lakh. The facilities department of the Ministry of Education has constructed the building.

Installation ceremony
COMILLA, Feb 6: Installation ceremony of the newly elected executive committee of Comilla Press Club was held on January 28, at the Club premises, reports BSS.

Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru was present in the function as the chief guest. Whip Mujibur Hoque and Public Administration Reforms Commission Chairman ATM Shamsul Hoque were the special guests. Newly elected Press Club President Golam Mostafa Chowdhury presided over the function.

Aman procurement drive
SHERPUR, Feb 6: Aman procurement drive has begun in the district with a target to procure over 7,000 mts of paddy and rice, reports UNB.

Officials sources said paddy would be procured at Tk 8 while rice at Tk 12 per kg during the drive to be continued till February 28. An official said although the drive started elsewhere in the country in the first week of December 1999, but it was delayed here due to political turmoil here. He said paddy would be procured directly from growers while rice from 150 rice mill owners of the district. The official also attributed the delay in launching the drive to accommodation crisis in food godowns.

Pry school building opens
BRAHMANBARIA, Feb 6: Private Secretary to the Prime Minister RAM Obaidul Muktar Chowdhury inaugurated newly built building of East Medda Government Primary school on Sunday, reports BSS.

He also visited Brahmanbaria High School, Medda Islamiya Dakhil Madrasa and East Medda Government Primary school. Local municipality Chairman M Helaluddin, Sadar and Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shah Kamal accompanied him.

Housewife commits suicide
BENAPOLE (Jessore), Feb 6: A housewife, Fulbana, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison recently at village Kallani in Sarsha thana, reports BSS.

Fulbana, 30, was the wife of Nuruddin of the village. A case was registered in this connection.



Foggy weather has been prevailing in Jhenidah for the last few days. Photo shows a rickshaw van puller pulling his vehicle along with a passenger risking their lives. — Star photo

Corruption case against UP chairman

SHARIATPUR, Feb 6: Chairman of Nagerpara Union Parishad in Gosairhat thana Abul Kalam Kazi has been sued for allegedly misappropriating 16 mts of grains allocated for distressed women, reports UNB.

According to the case filed with Gosairhat police Saturday, the chairman embezzled 6.9 mts of rice and 9.3 mts of wheat allotted in October and November 1999.

When contacted, the inquiry officer of the case said steps were underway to arrest the chairman.

Tiger kills man

SATHKHIRA, Feb 6: A tiger killed one person in Kalagachi forest area in the Sunderbans under Shyamnagar thana on January 27, reports BSS.

Family sources said, Abdur Rahman, 35, of village Munshiganj under Shyamnagar thana was fishing in the Kalanchi river in Kalagachi Forest Range area with his son. Suddenly, a tiger attacked them and took away Abdur Rahman in the deep forest. Later, his son and other fishermen, with the help of the forest guards, recovered Abdur Rahman's body from the deep forest.

Irrigation being hampered in Madaripur

MADARIPUR, Feb 6: Irrigation in three thanas of the district is being hampered as five sluice gates went out of order due to siltation in the river Nimnokumar, reports UNB.

The sluice gates were set up in Kalkini, Rajoir and Sar thanas in 1962 to provide irrigation facility to 80,000 acres of land in the district.

But the sluice gates, installed on the estuary of different canals, cannot be operated due to fall of water level in river Nimnokumar, said an official.

The river now has virtually turned into a huge char shoal, as dredging in it was not done since the independence.

Meanwhile, valuable timbers and other equipment of the sluice gates are being stolen as those lying abandoned there.

1,350 killed in Aricha road mishaps in 6 years

MANIKGANJ, Feb 6: At least 1,350 people were killed and 21,730 others injured in road accidents on Dhaka-Aricha highway in last six years, reports UNB.

According to police, hospital and fire brigade sources, some 570 people fell victims of deformity in 1,624 accidents during the period.

The losses caused by accidents were estimated at about Tk 1,500 crore.

Of the total, some 247 people were killed in the year of 1994, 219 people in 1995, 236 people in 1996, 308 people in 1997, 197 in 1998 and 143 people in the year 1999.

Blankets distributed

BANDARBAN, Feb 6: A total of 200 pieces of blankets has been distributed in Bandarban Hill district recently by Chairman of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) Bir Bahadur, Chairman of Hill District Council Thowaiing Cha Prue Master and Red Crescent representatives, reports BSS.

District administration also distributed 686 blankets in seven thanas among the poor tribal and non-tribal families.

Loan disbursed

NETRAKONA, Feb 5: Youth Development Department has taken up a programme to impart training to jobless youths of Netrakona district, reports UNB.

Officials said the department has also disbursed Tk 1.8 crore soft-term loan among 600 youths, including girls, so that they can undertake self-employment programmes.

They said some 2,855 unemployed youths have received training on tailoring since 1998 while 3,500 others are now on training.

Another report says: Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) under its poverty alleviation programme distributed loan totalling Tk 9.45 crore in Jhenidah zone during the last fiscal.

Officials said the loan was distributed among 18,200 poor people of the zone comprising Jhenidah and Magura districts.

BARDB also realised over Tk 10.32 crore loan from its borrowers during the period.

Separate road mishaps kill 5 in three dists

A total of five persons were killed in separate road accidents recently in Barisal, Jessore and Sathkhira districts, reports agency.

Three persons including an woman were killed and six others were injured in two separate road accidents at Kasba under Gournadi thana of Barisal district on January 31.

According to police source, Mokshed Ali Sadar was crushed under speeding passengers' bus at Kasba under Gournadi thana at noon.

Saidul Khan and Mahunga Mani Chakma were killed and six others were injured at a bus-tempo head-on collision on the same spot at around mid-night on Monday last. The injured persons were admitted to the local health complex.

Two separate cases were lodged with Gournadi thana police in these connections.

One old man was killed in a road accident on Galipara road under Sharsha thana of Jessore district recently.

The victim was identified as Berek Sardar, 65.

According to eyewitnesses the old man was killed when a speeding truck knocked him down. He killed on the spot.

A case was filed in this connection.

One girl was killed in a road accident near at Brozaboxa road crossing on Sathkhira-Jessore road under Kalaroa thana of Sathkhira district recently.

The victim was identified as Nasrin, 12, daughter of Azizul of village Brozaboxa under Kalaroa thana.

Meeting of 11-party held in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, Feb 6: A meeting of 11 parties was held here recently in the premises of Sirajganj Government University College.

Chaired by Ismail Hossain, the meeting was addressed by CPB leader Monjurul Ahasan Khan as a chief guest.

Among others, Saiful Hoque, Advocate Ranesh Maitra, Jabiul Hoque Milu, Abu Ahmed Shahabuddin, Abdul Bari, Joarder, Nabo Kumar and student leader Torik addressed the meeting.

Discussion on law, order in Netrakona

NETRAKONA, Feb 6: A discussion on law and order and crime control method was held at Mohua Auditorium here recently under the auspices of the district administration, reports BSS.

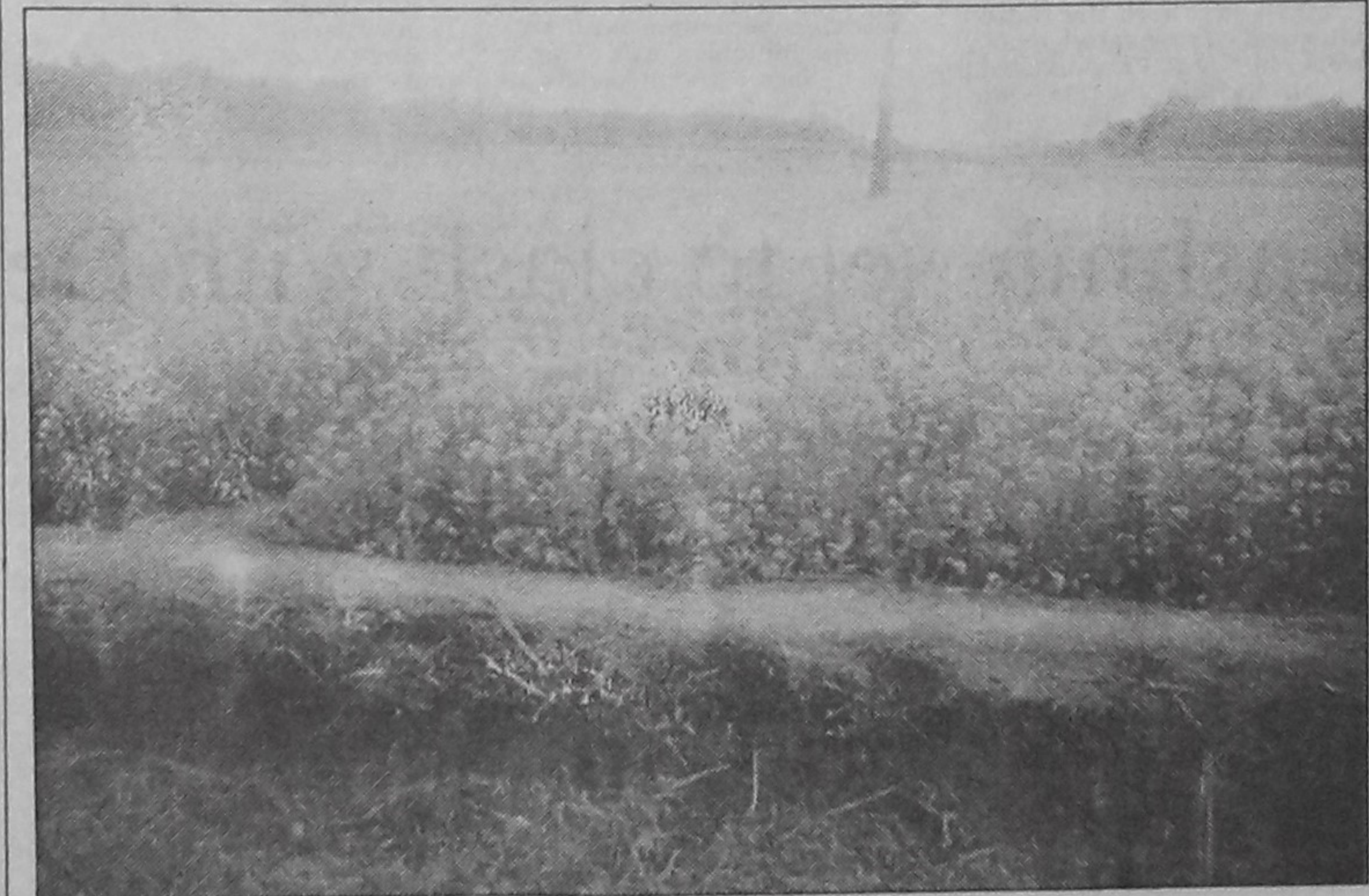
Police Super of Netrakona Kazi Joyanal Abedin, Bir Pratik, presided over the meeting.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Additional District Magistrate of Netrakona, Sheikh Abdul Gaffar, Additional Police Super, Matlur Rahman, Vice President of Netrakona District Awami League Advocate Sadruddin Ahmed, General Secretary of Netrakona District Bar Association, Advocate Rezaul Karim, Deputy Commander of District Mukhtoddha Sangsad, Jahurul Haque Hira, General Secretary of Netrakona Pura Awami League, Habibur Rahman Ratan and President of Netrakona District Chhatra League Prasanta Ray.

Some speakers informed that the rate of different types of crime incident including theft and cow lifting has registered a sharp rise in some areas of the town and its adjoining localities in recent days. They stressed the need for intensifying police vigils at night in different areas including Kathi, Nagra and Malni areas of the town.

Speaking at the meeting, Additional District Magistrate of Netrakona Sheikh Abdul Gaffar underlined the need for creating social awareness to ensure peace and security of the people.

In his speech, Police Super Kazi Joyanal Abedin said the criminal, whoever he is, will be dealt with iron hand. He made an appeal to the people of all walks of life to extend whole-hearted cooperation to the members of police to maintain law and order and curb crimes.



Farmers of Chandidashganti area in Sirajganj district expecting bumper production of mustard this season. — Star photo



A discussion meeting in progress in Netrakona town on the occasion of Rokeya Day. — Star photo