

# Feast on abandoned property

From Akhteruzzaman Bablu

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 9: A section of politically backed unscrupulous quarter in connivance with the local administration are grabbing relic buildings and land which are officially protected under the controversial Vested Property Act.



of these "abandoned properties" from the district administration. But soon the leaseholders procured 'documents' and 'managed a decree' as 'genuine' owners.

The only abandoned property that has not been grabbed is the house of Dr Parboty Babu as it is used as Moulana Bhasani Degree College. Administration sources said

But thanks to the local registry offices under the district administration, property worth Tk 25 crore has already been grabbed, sources said. Under the cover of "fake" papers, the grabbers have not only demolished scores of old buildings in the town, but also taken up projects to construct commercially lucrative structures.

after the lease the administration even failed to collect the lease money.

Among others who left the country in 1946-47, leaving behind huge properties are, Zamindar Kalidash Chowdhury, Johorimole Dugor, Nabokumer Duduria, Jamki Debi Harilal Shah, Khatish Vuson Ray and Surendro Nath Chowdhury.



One of the relic buildings in Sirajganj town left behind by Zamindar Kalidas Chowdhury. --Star photo

## Poultry farms face ruin

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Oct 9: Poultry farm owners in the district are facing problems as their products sell below expected prices.

Farm owners are losing interest to go for the business mainly due to lack of marketing facility. Farm owners said lack of marketing facility is the main problem they are facing. According to Faridul Islam, 31, of village Gopalpur under Shailakupa upazila of the district, demand

for chicken produced in farms is not high in the district mainly because of conservative eating habit. Locals do not like farm chickens. However, eggs produced in farms sell well in local markets.

In different markets of the district, broiler chickens are sold between Tk 50 and Tk 55 per kilogram while the indigenous variety between Tk 80 and 90 a kg.

Farid said he thought that his farm would help to remove his financial hardship, but the dream did not come true. The frustrated young man said he had spent at least Taka 25 thousand in 45 days during the fattening of the chickens, but the sale proceeds did not exceed Taka 29 thousand.

## FFs accord grand reception to PM tomorrow

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Oct 9: Some three thousand freedom fighters will accord a grand reception to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during a public rally at local Circuit House Ground scheduled on October 11 (Wednesday).

Syed Ashraful Islam, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, disclosed this at a press conference held at Mymensingh Press Club on Saturday evening.

All preparations have been made to make the ground rally a success, he said.

Political observers said that in an apparent bid to counter the massive opposition show at Mymensingh recently, the ruling party is organising the rally.

Some other farm owners said if the situation continues we shall be forced to close down the farms.

When contacted, Mahbubur Rahman, upazila livestock officer of Shailakupa, said actually there is no demand for broiler chicken here right now. Most of the consumers, especially the village people, prefer local variety.

He said although the broiler variety is enriched with food value and free from worms, rural people do not prefer it.

A source with the district livestock office said a total of 55 poultry farms exist in the district and most of these are located in Shailakupa upazila.

## Keane Bridge needs to be repaired

SYLHET, Oct 9: The age-old Keane Bridge over the River Surma in the town is now in vulnerable condition and became risky for all modes of vehicles, reports UNB.

Named after then Assam Provincial Governor Michel Keane, the 395-metre long and 5.5 metre wide bridge was constructed in 1936 costing Tk 56 lakh. It connected both parts of Sylhet town.

The bridge was in good condition till 1970. But during the war of Liberation in 1971, a portion of the bridge was blown away by dynamite explosion. After the war, the bridge was repaired and opened for light vehicles.

Bangladesh Railway repaired the bridge with concrete metals in 1977 and allowed movement of all modes of vehicles aiming to reduce traffic jam.

But as Rail Station, central bus terminal, all inter-district bus terminals and internal bus service stations located in South Surma, the bridge has to suffer increasing pressure day by day.

Longevity of the bridge has been reduced, as vehicles are to strand hours after hours on this strategic bridge due to heavy traffic jam forcing it to a vulnerable condition.

Town dwellers said the bridge now became risky for vehicular movement.

## Land port at Sonahat border suggested

RANGPUR, Oct 9: There is a bright prospect to establish direct business link between Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan with setting up of a land port at Sonahat border in Kurigram district, reports UNB.

"This will also help setting up industries and creating employment opportunity in the area," a delegation of FBCCI said this after visiting the area in September last.

It was learnt that there had been road and rail link between Lalmonirhat of Bangladesh to Dhubri of Assam, India via Mogolhat, Gitaldha, Joy Monirhat, Patershon, Sonahat and Golokganj during the British period but the communication was suspended after partition.

But the bridges and other infrastructures on the route are there and it is possible to restore the road and rail link between Sonahat to the northeastern states of India after completion of the Dharala

Bridge. A competent source said that a proposal to set up a land port at Sonahat is under active consideration of the government.

Local people said many jute mills, paper mills and agro-based industries could be set up beside the Dharala bridge after establishing the land port which will boost the economic activities of the country and create employment opportunity.

Meanwhile, construction works on 648-metre Dharala bridge, at a cost of Tk 97.85 crore, is going on in full swing.

About 35 per cent work of the bridge has been completed and the rest is expected to be completed by January 2003.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the construction work of Dharala Bridge on February 24.

## 'Gas will go to Pabna in March'

PABNA, Oct 9: Claiming that terrorism has been brought under control Home Minister Mohammad Nasim on Saturday said it could be eliminated from the country had the opposition cooperated with the government, reports UNB.

Speaking at a foundation laying ceremony of the academic building of Shaheed Fazlul Haq High School in the town the minister announced that gas line would be extended to Pabna in March next and the railway line in the near future. Internet and mobile phone will be introduced shortly.

The minister took the pride in saying that developments made in Pabna during the last four years were more than what had been done in previous 21 years. He pointed to the construction of Science & Technology University, Teachers Training College, Pakshi Bridge and that of EPZ at Iswardi which would be opened by the Prime Minister soon.

Nasim noted with satisfaction that nowhere in

the country people died of starvation even in the aftermath of the devastating flood in 1998. Around one crore people were provided food free of cost for six months.

Narrating achievements of the Awami League government he said they had initiated allowance to elders and widows, employment bank benefiting the youths, restored peace in the hill tracts, signed Ganges water treaty with India and arrested terrorism in southwestern region of the country.

The minister asked the people not to be misled by the propaganda dished out by the opposition, which they started ahead of election.

He termed HM Ershad of Jatiya Party as monafeq, who was given a fresh life by Awami League setting him free from the jail. He regretted that Ershad has now joined hands with Begum Khaleda Zia in conspiring against Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister.

# News snaps

## Madrasa student shot at

BAGETHAT, Oct 9: A madrasa student was shot at allegedly by one of his friends in PC College area on Monday, reports UNB. Police said the victim, identified as Razzak, 18, of Horinkhanna area, was hospitalised.

## BCL-PCP clash leaves 5 hurt

RANGAMATI, Oct 9: A clash between the activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League and Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) on Tuesday left 5 students injured, reports UNB. Witnesses said the trouble ensued at the Technical Training Centre (TTC) here over forming the committee of Chhatra League. Two of the injured were identified as Alamgir, 18, and Jahangir, 19, Chhatra League and PCP held each other responsible for the untoward incident at the TTC.

## Conviction

COMILLA, Oct 9: A court here has sentenced three people to 10 years rigorous imprisonment each in separate cases under Women and Child Repression Act, reports UNB.

The court also fined the convicts Manik Miah and his brother Selim Miah of Jagannathpur village in Sadar Upazila and Abdur Rahman of Maipur village of Patuakhali district Tk 5,000 each, in default, to suffer six months RI more. According to the prosecution, Manik Miah and Selim Miah grievously injured Dulari wife of Manik Miah by a sharp weapon last year as she refused to bring Tk 1 lakh dowry from her parents. In another incident, Asia, wife of Abdur Rahman was beaten mercilessly by her husband for dowry on May 10, 1997. After examining reports and witnesses, the court pronounced the judgements on Wednesday and Thursday.

## Imprisonment

COMILLA, Oct 9: A court here has sentenced a man to seven years rigorous imprisonment in a snatching case, reports UNB.

The court also fined convict Zulhas Miah Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer six months more RI. According to the prosecution, Zulhas Miah and his associate Nasim Miah snatched Tk 50,000 from Md Israfil, a teacher of Amir Hossain Jubeda College in Bhahmanpara upazila, on Feb 23, 1995. After examining records and witnesses, the Additional District and Sessions Judge pronounced the judgement recently.

## Obituary

RANGAMATI, Oct 9: Renowned music teacher Suniti Ranjan Barua died at Rangamati General Hospital on Tuesday. He was 65, reports UNB.

He is survived by three sons, three daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death. The funeral of Barua was held at Asam-basti crematory on Wednesday. Various organisations expressed shock at the death of the teacher and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

## Meena Day observed

SHERPUR, Oct 9: Meena Day 2000 was observed here on September 24 with much enthusiasm and huge participation of children, reports UNB.

On the occasion, District Primary Education Office in cooperation with Unicef arranged a Meena fair at the local Town Hall. Seven stalls, decorated with Meena's cartoon, colourful posters and festoons, were set up in the fair. District Health, Education and Mass Education Departments set up the stalls apart from five upazila education offices. The Deputy Commissioner inaugurated the daylong Meena fair where painting competition, discussion and prize giving ceremony were held.

## Man hacked to death

JESSORE, Oct 9: A man was hacked to death allegedly by his family members at village Sanyasgachha in Keshiapur upazila, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Kanailal Dey, 45. Meanwhile, police arrested the victim's brother Aurn Kumar Dey and his son Pradip Dey in connection with the killing.

## World Heart Day

KHULNA, Oct 9: Chairman of Khulna branch of National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh (NHFB) and Mayor of Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Shaikh Tayebur Rahman called upon the different social welfare organisations and rich men to help in setting up a heart hospital in Khulna, to provide better treatment to the heart patients of this area, report BSS.

He made this appeal while addressing, as the chief guest, a seminar at Zia Hall Auditorium recently. The seminar was organised under the auspices of National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh (NHFB), Khulna branch, on the occasion of World Heart Day 2000. Jute mill worker leader killed

## Jute mill worker murdered

NARSINGDI, Oct 9: A leader of Bangladesh Jute Mill Workers Union was chopped to death at the mill gate in Ghorasal industrial area on Sunday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Nurul Islam Bakul, 45, general secretary of Workers Union of the mill. Police said a gang of 16 miscreants swooped on Bakul and chopped him to death while he was preparing to hold a rally of workers at about 3.30 pm. They said the assailants terrorised the workers of the mill by exploding bombs before killing Bakul. Three workers suffered splinter injuries in the bomb explosion. Police from Polish thana rushed to the spot and sent the body to hospital for autopsy. Bakul, hailing from Kaliganj upazila in Gazipur, is believed to have been killed by his rivals in a sequel to labour politics. Additional police have been deployed in the area to stave off further trouble.

## Cash, valuables looted

BAGERHAT, Oct 9: Armed bandits looted cash and valuables worth about Tk 70,000 from two houses at Mandartala village in Millahat upazila early on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said the robbers numbering about 7 first stormed the house of Khoka Mondal and looted goods worth of Tk 40,000 after tying up the house inmates. Housewife Indra Moti suffered wounds as the bandits hit her with a sharp weapon. Later, the robbers burst into the house of Pagol Roy and looted cash and valuables worth about Tk 30,000. However, the villagers caught two of the robbers Rabiul and Hasmat Ali Molla from Zirantala while they were decamping with the booty.

## Man killed in road mishap

JHALAKATHI, Oct 9: A middle-aged man fatally wounded under the wheels of a bus died on way to Barisal Medical College Hospital on Sunday evening, reports UNB.

The victim, Abdus Samad, 45, was trying to embark on a running bus near Basanda bridge on Barisal-Pirojpur Road at 4 pm, but fell down and went under the wheels of the vehicle. He was rushed to Jhalakathi hospital where doctors advised to take him to Barisal Medical College Hospital. He died on way. A worker of Khulna Crescent Jute Mills in Khulna, Samad was going to the workplace from his father-in-laws house.

## Tribal youth abducted

KHAGRACHHARI, Oct 9: A tribal youth was abducted and killed allegedly by the hired goons in Ramgarh upazila, police said Friday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Surya Kumar Tripura, 23, of Rupachhari village in the same upazila. Police said the hoodlums hired by Surya's elder brother and sisters kidnapped him from his house on September 30 and later killed him. There had been a quarrel between Surya and his elder brother and two sisters over land for a long, police said. Meanwhile, police arrested five people: Shachi Kumar Tripura, Rajani Tripura, Monindra Tripura, Bishati Tripura and Blandra Tripura in connection with the killing.

## Youth with phensidyl arrested

COMILLA, Oct 9: Police arrested a young man with 70 bottles of phensidyl syrup from Kandirpar area of the town on October 1, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police arrested Alam while going to the town bus stand with phensidyl inside a sack. Meanwhile, villagers rounded up three youths while moving suspiciously in a motorcycle in Saitvani village in Choudagram upazila on October 2 and recovered one pipe gun, one bullet and bomb-making materials from their possession. Later the youths identified as Kabir Hossain, Hayatunnabi and Jahangir of village Mihinti were handed over to police. Another report from Madaripur says that a disgraced father of Harikumar village in Sadar upazila handed over his misguided son to police on October 3. Police said Abdul Aziz Howladar handed over his son Abdur Rab, 25, to them as he failed to resist him from various criminal activities.

# Photo feature on flood in districts



Flood has affected lakhs of people in eight districts of the western and southwestern frontier districts bordering the Indian state of West Bengal. Photo shows (top left) destroyed mud houses in Satkhira district, (top right) flood victims of Kalaroa in Satkhira in search of a safe shelter, (bottom left) flood affected Sarajit Kumar Biswas and his family members have taken shelter on Dhoneswargati-Thoipara Road as their house at Maniknagar in Shalikhra upazila in Magura district has been submerged by water, (bottom centre) flood victims living under the open sky near Karpashdanga Bazaar in Damurhuda upazila of Chuadanga district, (bottom right) Angikar cultural organisation in cooperation with the Army distributing relief materials among the flood affected people of Karpashdanga in Chuadanga district --Star photo