

Upazila roundup

BHOLA

Tk 201.25 cr BK B loan yet to be realised

From Our Correspondent
January 31: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) is yet to realise out-standing loan of about Tk 201.25 crore from the farmers of southern districts.

According to the official sources, BKB disbursed the loan through its 188 branches in Bhola, Barisal, Barguna, Jhalakati, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Faridpur, Shantipur, Madaripur, Gopalganj and Rajbari districts.

The bank has filed 22,564 certificate cases against the defaulters.

Meanwhile, the bank has planned to disburse Taka 49 crore as agricultural loan during the current fiscal year in the said districts.

Fire station

Fire station at Charfession is yet to be set up though a scheme was taken up five years back.

According to the report, land for the purpose was purchased by concern authority at Charfession upazila. But, yet the project has not been implemented due to shortage of funds.

The local people urged the concerned authority to take necessary steps to set up the proposed fire station as early as possible.

RANGPUR

2 brothers killed in road accident

January 31: Two brothers were killed on a road accident on Rangpur-Domar Highway, police here said, reports UNB.

Witnesses said that Abdul Momin (25) and Amirul Rahman (24) of village Kismotpur under Kishoreganj upazila were returning home on a motorbike recently while a speeding truck knocked them down.

The driver fled with the vehicle immediately. A case has been registered in this connection.

Revenue loss

Government has incurred a huge revenue loss due to hurried auctioning of 22 Indian smuggled oxen at an unexpected low price, local people alleged.

According to sources, Bangladesh Rifles seized the oxen while being smuggled into the country through Nilphamari border areas on Monday. They were later handed over to Rangpur Customs department.

Rangpur Customs on the same day sold the oxen at Tk 50,000 in auction, the market price of which was about Tk three lakh, the sources said.

A customs official told UNB that there was no hard and fast rule for keeping cattleheads in their custody for days together.

Local people have demanded an immediate impartial enquiry into the matter.

NARAIL

Random use of firewood

From Our Correspondent

January 31: Despite government ban the owners of about 40 brick fields in three upazilas of Narail district are using firewood for burning bricks.

There is none to check the indiscriminate felling of trees for use in the brick fields of the district.

At least three crores of bricks will be burnt with firewood in the three upazilas during this season.

The brickfield owners are using firewood instead of coals. On the other hand a huge quantity of coal was lying unsold in coal depot.

The number of trees of three upazilas is decreasing following indiscriminate felling of trees for use as fuel in both brick fields and houses.

DINAJPUR

Press Club executives

From Our Correspondent

January 31: Dinajpur Zila Press Club was formed in a meeting held in a local hotel with Mr. Taheruddin Ahmed, Editor of weekly Utarkantha in the chair recently.

A 21-member convening committee of the club is as follows: Convener-Nurul Amin Chhanda (Chitralpa), Joint Convener-Sadkat Ali (Dainik Sangram) and Abdul Rahman (Dainik Uttarbanga), Members-Taheruddin Ahmed, Nurul Islam (The Bangladesh Times),

Mantruzzaman Babla (Banglar Bani), Nazmun Nahar Begum (Daily Star), Badal Mukharjee (Dainik Uttarbanga), Sajedur Rahman Shilu (Dainik Dinkal), Ramjan Mahmood (Dainik Sangram), Abdul Majid (New Nation), Abdul Waresh (Dainik Desh), Abul Hasan (Dainik Uttarbarta), Shahjada Rafique (Dainik Millat), Ekramul Huq (Dainik Uttara), Saifur Rahman (Editor, Dainik Simantabarta), Nazmul Islam (Bangabasi), Saiful Islam (weekly Suchitra), Matnuddin Ahmed Ripon (weekly Muktibani), and Shahjahan Sarker (weekly Sonarbangla).

KOTWALIPARA

Posts of 4 UZ officers vacant

From Our Correspondent

January 31: Posts of four upazila officers are vacant since long.

Official sources said that the position of Upazila Magistrate is vacant for six months, Sub-Judge for eight months, Settlement Officer for seven months and Sub-Magistrate for 11 months.

Acting Sub-registrar of Kotwalipara said that he is originally posted in Mokshedpur upazila of the district, but he comes every week to Kotwalipara to maintain the office. He has to sign about hundreds of land registration cases on the scheduled day of the week.

PANCHAGARH

Civic amenities absent

January 31: Over 50,000 town-dwellers here are suffering due to lack of civic amenities, reports UNB.

Innumerable cracks and potholes have developed on roads where water remains stagnant even after a slight rainfall.

Besides, public health has been endangered by acute scarcity of drinking water. Of 272 tubewells, about 120 are said to be lying inoperative in the panchavara areas.

Moreover, the town often plunges into darkness after sundown due to power disruptions giving rise of anti-social activities.

Local people complain that garbage is dumped here and there at a rate not cleared regularly which turns into breeding centres of mosquitoes.

In absence of recreational facilities like stadium, gymnasium and park, physical and mental growth of children have also been hampered.

PATUAKHALI

Public toilet needed

January 31: Absence of public toilet has been posing threat to health and sanitation of the town-dwellers, reports UNB.

People coming to the town, a busy commercial centre, allegedly defecate on roadsides polluting the atmosphere.

Women and children who are coming to the town for various reasons are the worst sufferers.

Local people alleged that they appeal led to the authorities time and again to set up adequate number of public toilets in the town, but no action has yet been taken in this regard.

Kishoreganj

Arable land shrinking in

Arable land in all the 13 upazilas of the district is rapidly shrinking due to construction of dwelling houses, reports UNB.

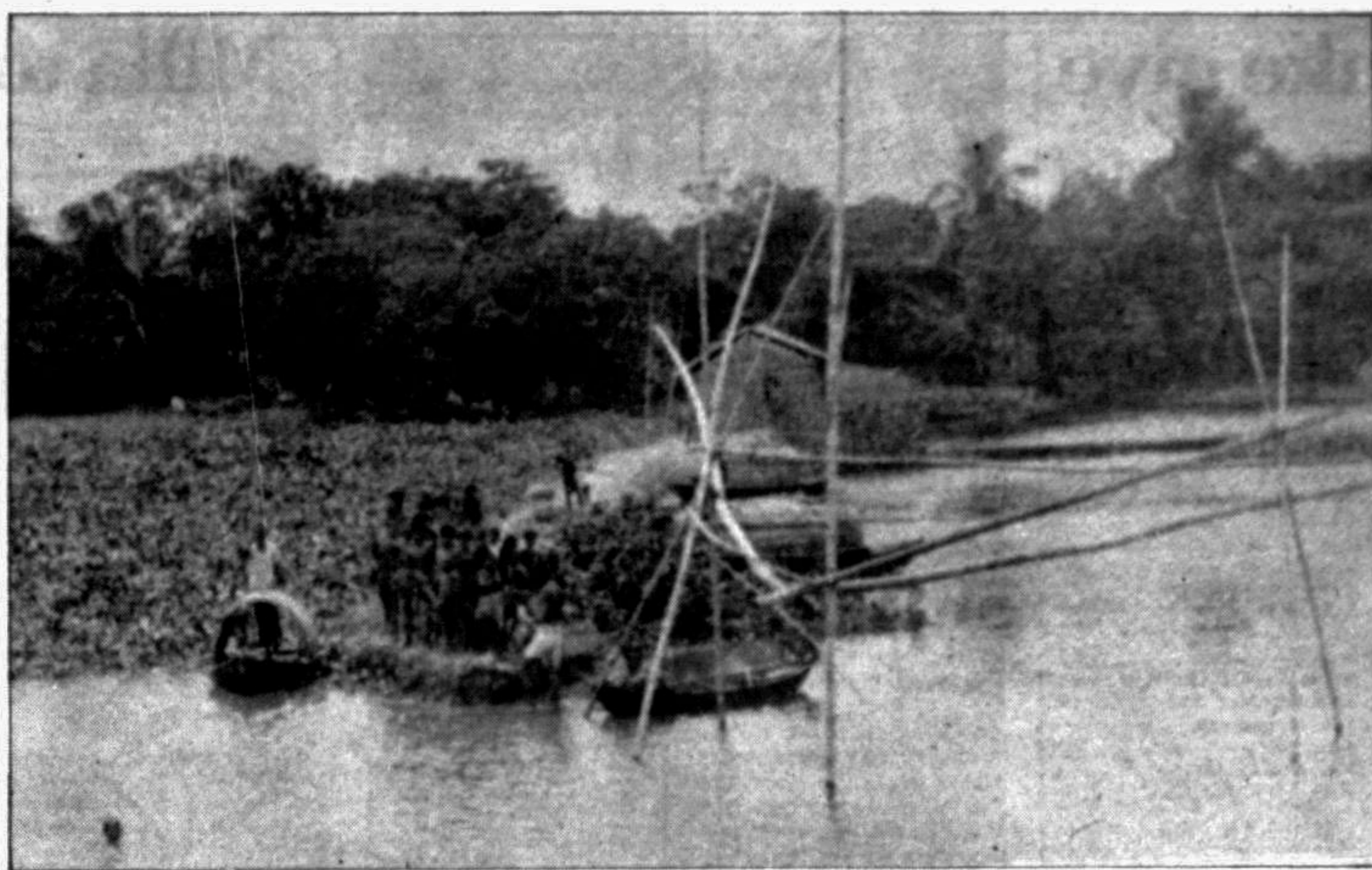
The district witnessed a construction boom in the recent years to cope with the rising population.

According to sources, about 3000 acres of cultivable land in Karimganj, Tarail, Mitaman, Austagram, Itna, Bajitpur, Bhairab, Kuliara, Pakundia, Hostagram, and Sadar upazilas were used to construct new houses over the last ten years.

Besides, brickfields are being built on farmland indiscriminately by unscrupulous owners hampering cultivation.

Erosion of the rivers Meghna, Brahmaputra, and Dhau also devoured hundreds of acres of land during last ten years. Roads have also been constructed further reducing agricultural land.

With the decentralisation of administration, 13 upazila complexes have been constructed on a large areas of agricultural land causing crop loss of lakhs of taka.



When kutcha roads are yet to be constructed or bridges built village people have no option but to reach their destinations by boat, the only means of transport available. - Star photo

WASA still a dream

Pure water scarce in Khulna

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 31: Acute scarcity of drinking water is prevailing in the metropolitan city.

About two crore gallons of water are required daily for over 12 lakh people residing in 37.03 sq.k.m area of the city whereas only 70 lakh gallons of water are being supplied per day.

WASA is still to be a non-materialised dream to the people of this metropolitan city. The city dwellers have been living the unfulfilled demand for one crore 30 lakh gallons of water a day.

Concerned sources said, Khulna City Corporation submitted a prayer before the

Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development for sanctioning Taka six crore in 1989-90 fiscal year with a view to solving the water crisis in the city.

Mention may be made here establishment of WASA in Khulna city was one of the 18-point demand of Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee (KDACC). In this connection the Committee submitted memorandum before the concerned authority on several occasions. Repeated assurances were given by those authorities but no steps have been taken to implement it as yet. When I visited some areas of the city, I saw most of the water taps were open which is

another cause for the water crisis. Besides, in the adjoining areas of the city I also found people still drink pond water.

When an Engineer of Khulna City Corporation was asked whether WASA would be all set up here he, however, could not give any satisfactory answer.

Tele-link may collapse

The tele-communication of the Khulna city may collapse at any moment.

The renovated exchange damaged during the liberation was functioning since last 20 years after a partial repair.

The switch room which is in a very bad condition and

somehow managed to carry out the work may cause mechanical disorder at any moment.

The exchange situated in the heart of the city presently has become inoperative due to acute spare parts shortage and absence of renovation work. There are presently 1,800 subscribers in this unit but the number is increasing day by day, as a result cross connection is rampant.

The sources alleged that the switch room of the exchange should be changed completely for providing better services to the subscribers of this industrial port city and also the connections should be given within its capacity.

Notes from Gaibandha

January 31: Agitated people have been detaining Teesta Intercity Express train creating barricade on Railway tracks at Kamarpara and Bamondanga Railway stations almost every-day demanding restoration of suspended 401 Up and 402 Down local trains.

As a result Teesta Intercity Express train is running three to six hours late everyday. This deadlock was created after the suspension of a Parbatipur-Teestamuk Ghat 401 local train. The Railway authority without assigning any specific reason suspended the said train since January 1.

Following suspension of the said train people of this section are facing trouble in travelling between Bonarpara to Kawnia as there is no other local train in this section after the noon.

People who visited Gaibandha for serving different purposes could not return to their respective destinations for want of local train. It may be mentioned here that at present only a single local train is in operation in this section.

But still three more local trains are necessary to cope with the increasing rush of the passengers. Moreover deplorable road communication in this area multiplied the suffering of the people.

Reading programme

Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, Gaibandha unit started a 'book reading programme-91' for the college students.

Two programmes were inaugurated separately at Gaibandha Government College and Government Mohila College on January 24. Mr. Giasuddin Ahmed, Principal of Gaibandha Government College and Mr. Mofazzal Hossain, Principal of Gaibandha Mohila College formally inaugurated the programmes in their respective institute as chief guests.

Mr. Mohamed Mijarul Quayes, Director of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra was present as special guest. About 80 students from both the colleges are participating in the programme.

Science Week

The 14th National Science and Technology Week was formally inaugurated at Gaibandha Government College auditorium on January 26. Dr. Mubarak Ali Akanda, Director, National Science Museum was present as chief guest.

Juvenile scientists from over 30 schools and clubs participated in the week with their attractive displays.

Ramsagar lake can be an important tourist site

From Our Correspondent

THAKURGAON, Jan 31: The four-century-old Ramsagar Lake (dighi), five miles from Dinajpur town, can be an important tourist spot if fully developed. The lake, one and a half mile long and quarter of a mile wide, is connected with the district town by metalled road.

About 400 years ago, during the pest of Raja Ram Nath, there was a famine and hundreds of people died. Finding no other alternative, the Raja decided to engage the poor in work and began to dig the big diht to provide them with job. The history also says, lakhs of people participated in the work and dug the Ramsagar in a single night and also built a temple with 50 doors on the northern side of the diht. It is known, the labourers to clean their spades and baskets, dug two more ponds namely 'Nashandighi' and 'Bibisarak' - one is situated at the south east and the other is at the north east corner, near Ramsagar.

There are different opinions about the naming of Ramsagar. Some of the historians say that the name Ramsagar is after the name of Raja Ram

Nath, but another opinion mentions that after the great victory of Islam, the Raja was bound to put the name 'Amsagar' where 'Am' means for all. The Sagar is for all to avoid the communal feelings.

After the completions of digging work, there was no flow of water. Next night, the Raja was ordered in the dream to build a temple at the bottom of the Sagar and two child would have to be dedicated there. Accordingly, a temple was built and two children of scheduled caste were locked up inside the temple but they were given some sweets to eat. Then and there, there was a burst of sound and flow of water began. Within an hour, Ramsagar was full of water. This is the history of the Ramsagar.

However, later in the year 1964, the then East Pakistan Governor Mr. Monem Khan in a public meeting at Ramsagar, declared that he would take up the diht to cultivate fish in the water and fruit bearing trees and timber plants in the land and hill. For plant protection a boundary wall would be made. Later, Fishery and Forest Department offices were established at Ramsagar.

Thousands of visitors come here for recreation, particularly in the winter among hundreds of picnickers. Natural beauty of the Sagar charms foreigners and local people alike. Inner path from gate to Bungalow was constructed earlier.

On both sides of the road coconut trees add to the beautification. Telelink and electricity facilities, picnic sheds, parking lots are being provided. Toilets were built and shallow tubewells sunk to irrigate the plants in the dry season, at a cost of several lakhs of taka.

In 1975, a plan was taken to build a holiday resort with 25 beds in Ramsagar. A signboard was also hung on the east hill by the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation. But it is not known why the plan was shelved.

People urged the government to make Ramsagar attractive to an ever increasing number of visitors and suggested to build the holiday resort and animal corner where tiger, deer, monkey and birds may be kept. Speed boats, caen-teen facilities should also be provided.

Trains run late, passengers suffer

KUSHTIA, January 31: Train passengers of this region particularly Poradah-Rajbari section are facing immense difficulties owing to irregular running of trains. Moreover trains in this section are very few in number. Besides the number of compartments in each train is too meagre to cope with the rush of passengers. Sometime there are no first class and second class compartments at all creating great inconvenience for the upper class passengers who are compelled to run in overcrowded third class compartments.

The number of passengers travelling without tickets have of late increased as there are no checking in this line bringing misery to the genuine passengers. Moreover innumerable baggers, total collectors and women carrying commercial belongings from one station to another and untold sufferings to the passengers.

On the other hand com-

partments are not kept clean and sometimes water is not available in the latrines. Waiting rooms in most of the stations have no sitting arrangement for upper class passengers.

The condition of waiting room in almost all the stations of this section are in a pitiable state and remain dirty and found under lock and key at the time of need, it is alleged.

Road over Hardinge Bridge needed

The need of a road over the Hardinge Bridge on the Ganges has long been keenly felt by the people of north and south-

ern zones of the country. The ferry service in between Bheramara and Paksey is very unsatisfactory because of unusually long time it takes to cross the river. Moreover the rise of waterlevel makes constant shifting of ghat from one place to another at a huge cost of money.

Corruption in power distribution alleged

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Jan 31: Corruption in power distribution made the entire system of electric supply worst causing immense sufferings to the genuine domestic, commercial, industrial and agricultural consumers. Badly affected are agricultural and irrigation sectors.

It is learnt from reliable sources that authorised electric connections in Pabna stands at 8314, commercial connections domestic 2447, heavy industrial connections 13, small industrial connections 843 and agricultural connections 201.

Sources alleged that illegal connections have increased alarmingly and reached 50 per cent higher than the authorised connections.

The corruption gripped areas include Koladi, Masumpur, Laskarpur, Naldaha, Natiabari, Sadullahpur, Malanchi, Haluadbari, Dahapara, Panchabari, Bharenga, Bharare, Char-Halampur, Arifpur and many other adjacent areas.

Political scene

Candidates make house to house approach

Star report

Election campaigns, now continuing across the country, appear to be different compared to previous years. Electioneering in the past was confined mostly to public meetings and processions.

This year individual candidates have chosen house to house approach to impress upon the voters than to hold public gatherings. The candidates either belongs to big or small parties and the independents are literally chasing the voters upto the remotest corners of rural areas.

The candidates feel that old "tricks" to attract voters by pledging lofty things will not work. The voters are quite aware of their importance. They will judge a candidate by his merit.

Our Narail Correspondent adds: The election campaign in Narail district has gained momentum. The candidates are now visiting their respective constituencies to mobilise support in their favour. The campaign was started in full swing after the scrutiny of nomination papers by the Returning Officer. The supporters of the candidates in their efforts to popularise the election symbols of their respective candidates are bringing out processions and making door to door campaign.

There are in all 21 candidates for two parliamentary seats in Narail district. Of them 12 candidates in Narail-1 and nine candidates are in race in Narail-2 constituencies. The electioneering gives the impression that there will be a straight fight among Awami League, BNP and JSD (Inu) in Narail-1. While in Narail-2, there will be a straight fight among Awami League, BNP and United Communist League.

The prominent candidates include Dharendra Nath Saha (AL), Gautam Ritra (BNP) and Sarif Nurul Ambia (JSD Inu) in Narail-1 and Sarif Khushruzzaman (AL), Mokbul Hussain (BNP) and Bimal Bisas (JCL) in Narail-2.

Processions slogans and meetings are now common features in the villages. Election camps have been set up in every hook and corner of villages. Posters are posted in village hats and bazars.

The tempo of campaign generally picks up in the evening.

The workers of the candidates were found appealing to the voters.

The voters seemed careful elect honest and dedicated men as their representatives. The voters were found discussing among themselves of candidates. The total number of voters in Narail district is 406670 of when 198985 are females.

Kishoreganj

Our Kishoreganj Correspondent adds: Fifty nine candidates from different political parties and independents are contesting the coming Jatya Sangsad election in the seven constituencies of Kishoreganj district.

The party wise candidates are as follows: AL-7, BNP-7, JP-6, Zaker Party-6, Jamaat-4, JSD-(Rob) 4, CPI-3, Muslim League-3, Oikya Front-1, Workers Party-1, Baksal-2, Gonotantri Party-1, Sharmyabadi Dal-1, and Independent-13.

Earlier, 82 candidates of different political parties and independents submitted their nomination papers of which 23 were withdrawn.

Candidates who withdraw, were three from Kishoreganj-1, two from Kishoreganj-2, six from Kishoreganj-3, one from Kishoreganj-4, three from Kishoreganj-5, six from Kishoreganj-6 and two from Kishoreganj-7.

Besides, a total 13,67,167 voters are likely to exercise their franchise in the coming parliamentary election on February 27 to elect seven members of parliament from Kishoreganj district. Out of the total voters 7,16,416 are male and 6,50,751 female.

Polling will be held through 2,460 booths of 530 polling centers.

A total of 7,910 officials will be engaged to conduct the election smoothly. Of them 530 are Presiding Officers, 2460 Assistant Presiding Officers and 4,920 Polling Officers.

Magura

Our Magura Correspondent says: Campaign for the parliamentary polls in Magura is getting momentum.

The supporters of different political parties have become active and have already begun wall writings and painting the election symbols of their respective parties. The candidates along with their men are visiting for flung areas and exchanging greetings with the people.

To achieve support they are explaining their respective political ideology and opinion. The workers and supporter too are not lagging behind in this respect. They have started mud slinging to each other. Many of them lack tolerance which is essential for conducting an impartial and peaceful election. The rural party workers have begun offering tea, bide and cheap cigarettes to the voters in order to gain their favour in the coming polls. It is noticeable that poor are not expressing so much interest in the election due to be held on February 27 next.

Comilla

BSS from Comilla states: The political leaders of Comilla began vigorous election campaign in their respective constituencies.

Comilla town has turned into a veritable garden of posters, placards, festoons, banners and election camps.

A total of 105 candidates will contest the election for 12 seats in the district.

Since the submission of nomination papers by the candidates electioneering has got underway. Printing presses and tea stalls are making roaring business. Microphone are blaring commitments of individual candidates days in and days out to woo the voters but they are tight-lipped whom to vote for.

Chittagong

Another message from Chittagong adds: Leaders of 5-Party Alliance called upon the Political Alliances and parties to stick to November 19 agreement which envisaged not only ouster of the autocratic Government but also achievement of democracy.

Speaking at a session of exchanging of views with different professionals at the Press Club here, the leaders said deviation from the agreement would amount to betrayal to the people.

Alliance leaders Matnuddin Khan Badal, Nuruddin Zahed Monju, Abul Kalam Azad and professionals Prof Abdul Mannan, Convener of Chittagong Sammilite Peshajibi Sangram Parishad, CUJ, President Akhtarunnabi, Advocate Rana Das Gupta, a leader of Hindu-Bodha Christian Oikya Parishad and others were present on the occasion.



NETRAKONA: An eye patient is being operated upon at an eye camp recently. - Star photo