

Upazila roundup

RAJSHAHI

Storm disrupts power supply

May 19: Rajshahi and the adjoining areas experienced severe storm accompanied with moderate rain yesterday evening, reports BSS.

Rajshahi city plunged into darkness as the power supply was disrupted due to storm which started at five p.m. and continued for about half an hour.

Some city roads, lanes and bylanes were submerged by the rain water.

The velocity of the storm was about ninety kms per hour but no report of damage or casualty was received from any part of the district.

SIRAJGANJ

Two killed

SIRAJGANJ, May 19: Two people were killed and 12 others injured in two separate incidents in district Thursday, police said, reports UNB.

According to sources, Ajit Sutra Dhar (35) of Bhangabari village in Belkuchi upazila was killed by lightning while he was taking rest in his house.

His wife Usharani (24) and their son were injured in the incident.

In another incident, Abdul Qudus (25) of Pipulbari village in Sadar upazila was killed in a clash between two rival groups on the same day. Ten people were also injured in the clash.

A case has been lodged with Sadar police in this connection.

SATKHIRA

Law, order situation deteriorates

May 19: Law and order situation in the district deteriorated during the last four months giving rise to dacoity, murder, kidnapping and other anti-social activities, reports UNB.

Police said during the period about six dacoities, 12 murders, five kidnappings incidents, 13 clashes, 36 theft and other 400 crimes were committed.

A total of 260 people committed suicide in the district during the period. Among them 79 per cent were females and the rest males.

PATUAKHALI

House looted

May 19: A number of people led by Kalishuri Union Parishad Chairman recently looted and ransacked five to seven houses of Kalishuri village under Bauphal upazila, it is alleged.

It is learnt that Raham Ali hiring hundreds of miscreants who were armed with stick, ramdao and sharp weapons gheraoed the house of Nazem Ali and while opposed by Nazem Ali both the party came to clash which ended in looting and destruction of household belongings of five to six houses. Women inside the house were not escaped even. The miscreants harassed them too.

During the clash two people were seriously injured and they were taken to hospital. A case has been registered with Bauphal thana in this connection.

MUNSHIGANJ

Primary school teachers confce held

From Our Correspondent
May 19: The national conference of Bangladesh non-governmental (registered) Primary School Teachers' Society was held recently at P.T.I campus of Munshiganj.

Deep tubewells let out to Barendra farmers

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, May 19: Wheat and Irri-Boro cultivation faced a setback due to late decision taken by the Agriculture Ministry, to let out deep tubewells to the Barendra farmers.

The decision to let out the deep tubewells was taken when the wheat and Irri-Boro cultivation season has already elapsed. As a result, 1,50,000 acres of land under Barendra area remained uncultivated this year.

On the other hand, the work on Barendra Development Project has been dropped from the Annual Development Programme (ADP) after its partial imple-

Sadar recently. The conference was presided over by Alhaj Shahidul Islam Khan.

The General Secretary of Bangladesh Palli Chhikitsak Samity was present in the conference as the chief guest. The chief guest urged the government to pay the non-government primary school teachers Taka 500 per head as allowance. He also demanded of the government to nationalise the said schools immediately in order to mitigate the sufferings of the teachers.

Mattur Rahman and Md. Shahidul Islam Khan also addressed the conference.

A 31-member central committee was formed with Alhaj Shahidul Islam Khan as President and Md. Mattur Rahman as General Secretary.

C' NAWABGANJ

Road construction in progress

May 19: Construction of eight-kilometre Bholahat-Agarhat road at a cost of Taka 2.20 crore under Bholahat and Shitganj upazilas is going on in full swing, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the project financed by the World Bank will be completed by December next.

A local Government Engineering Bureau office source said about 50 per cent work has already been done.

SAVAR

Seminar on anti-autocracy movement

May 19: The Jahangirnagar University Journalists Association will hold a seminar on "anti-autocracy movement of Bangladeshis, the role, expectation and achievement of different classes and professions" tomorrow (Monday) at 10 am at the social science faculty gallery of the university, reports BSS.

Anu Muhammad, a teacher of the university will read out the keynote paper while State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Dr. Khondakar Mosharraf Hossain, Awami League Presidium Member Dr. Kamal Hossain, Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon, MP, CPB Secretary Samsuddoha, MP, Chairman of the Board of Editors of the Ittefaq and the New Nation Mainul Hossain, and Professor of English of Dhaka University Dr. Sirajul Islam Chowdhury will take part in the discussion.

The seminar will be dedicated to the memories of the victims of the cyclonic storm.

KURIGRAM

325 SSC examinees expelled

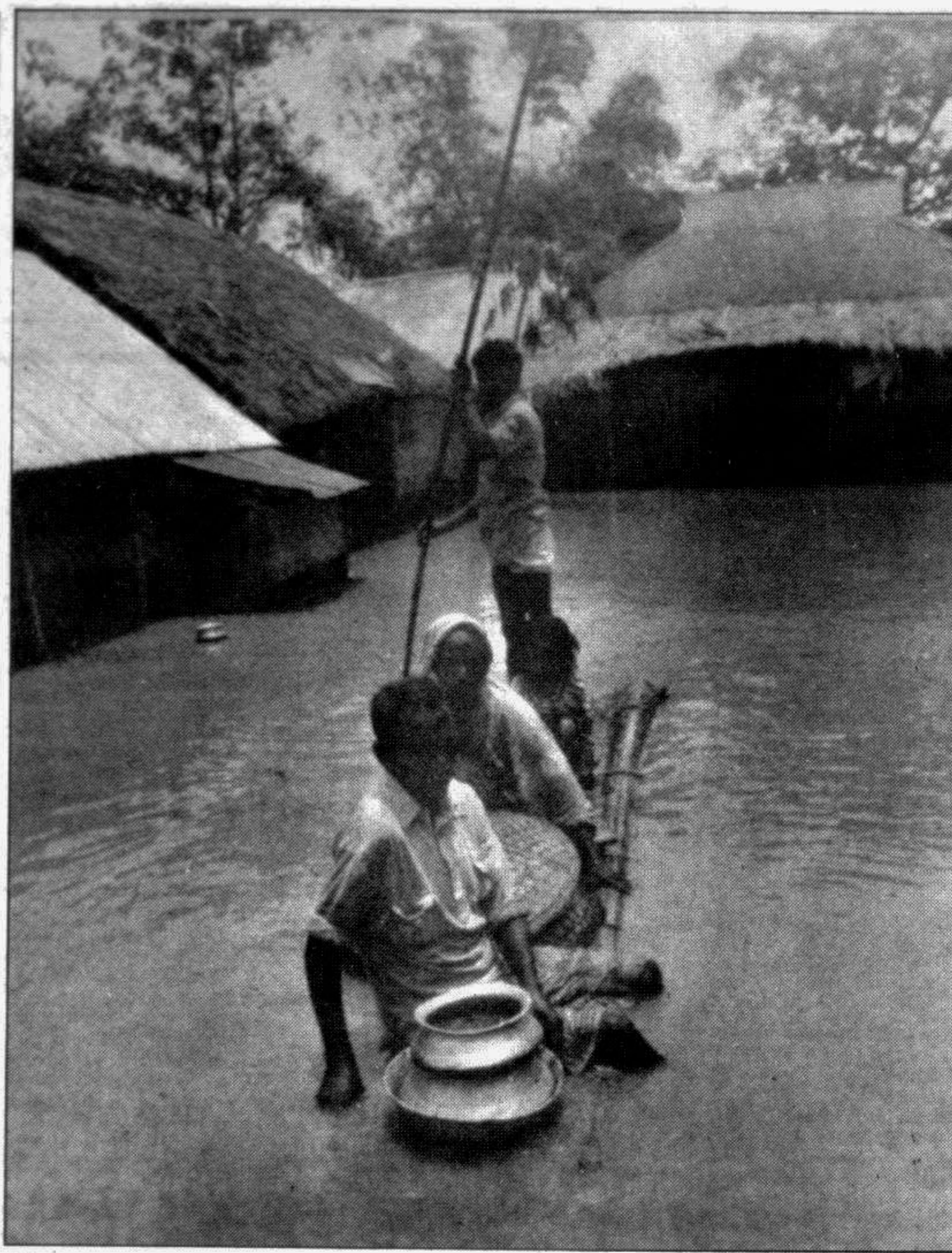
From Our Correspondent
May 19: A total of 325 SSC examinees have been expelled at eight centres of Kurigram district.

In all 5,776 candidates including 1,548 female examinees have been appearing at the SSC examination this year under Rajshahi Board from Kurigram district, it is learnt.

Meanwhile, 17 degree examinees were expelled from Kurigram government college centre for adopting unfair means in the exam halls, which began on May 9 under Rajshahi University.

Wedding
The marriage ceremony of Prof. Habibullah Khan, Vice-President, Bangladesh Journalist Association; Kurigram Zila Unit was solemnised recently with Nazma Begum alias Lili, the youngest daughter of Bahar Uddin Ahmed of village Khordo-Saptana, Lalmonirhat at bride's residence.

A large number of elite including journalists, teachers, students and poets attended the ceremony.



Flood affected people leaving submerged dwellings by a raft at Beanibazar. — Star photo

200 unauthorised power connections in Thakurgaon

From Our Correspondent

THAKURGAON, May 19: Frequent failure of power in Thakurgaon causes immense trouble to the consumers and loss to the industries and hinders irrigation.

According to a source of the Power Development Board, seven generators were installed at Thakurgaon Power Station located at Thakurgaon Road with a capacity of producing 10.5 megawatt power in 1982. The longevity of the generators is 28 years. At present, four generators are functioning and producing only 4 megawatt power which could not meet the domestic demand of 20 megawatts.

It may be mentioned here that in the five upazilas of the district, there are many deep shallow tubewells and low-lift pumps which are driven by power.

An Engineer of the PDB told this correspondent that the deficit in the power supply being met by the national grid. He informed that the cause of power failure at every now and then was the communication gap. He also opined if wireless of VHF system is introduced from the power control room, and transportation facility is given, the disruption in power supply can be avoided.

It is a matter of fact that

Classes suspended in Gurudayal Govt College

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, May 18: Gurudayal Government College authorities suspended all classes for two days Saturday following chase and counter-chase by two rival groups of students.

only one lineman and a helper were posted to the upazilas. Shortage of man power hampers the quick service.

Unauthorised connections

It is reported that about 2200 unauthorised domestic and business establishment connections were given in Thakurgaon Sadar, Haripur, Balladangi, Pirganj and Ranisankail upazilas.

It is alleged that most illegal connections were taken by police personnel living outside the thana boundary, influential persons and service personnel. Small traders in different huts and bazars are also consuming

illegal power in league with some dishonest PDB officials.

Stolen oil recovered

Five barrels of transformer oil, meant for transformer of different capacities to keep it cool and serviceable were recovered by the Ranisankail police recently.

It is learnt that there is a 33000 KV transformer at Nekmard sub-station where 42 barrel of oil were preserved. A large quantity of oil has been stolen from there. Acting on a secret information Ranisankail police recovered the barrels from a store of Nekmard Bazar.

A case has been lodged with Ranisankail police.

Govt will launch mass literacy programme

MYMENSINGH, May 19: Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs, yesterday said the BNP government would launch a revolutionary programme of mass education for the illiterate people, reports BSS.

He said the previous BNP government had also launched a mass literacy programme in 1980 when 40 lakh people were given literacy within a short time. He added that the autocratic government which discontinued the literacy programme will be responsible to the people.

The minister was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of a 3-day training workshop of supervisors of mass education programme at the National Academy of Primary Education

(NAPE) here yesterday.

Presided over by Noor Uddin A Mahmood Kamal, Joint-Secretary of the Ministry of Education, the function was addressed by local MP, A.K.M. Fazlul Hoq and Education Secretary Mr. A.N.M. Eusuf.

The Education and Cultural Affairs Minister said though education is one of the fundamental rights of the people, the rate of illiteracy has been increasing at an alarming rate and rated a difficult problem for the nation.

Prof. Chowdhury said every man has the right to know about his country's history, geography and culture which will be covered by mass education programme. He said the illiterate people should be given minimum functional education on health, nutrition, agriculture and science.

Unbelievable tales of cyclone survivors

CHITTAGONG, May 19: Some call it miracle, some take it as a mere chance and still some others accept it as a good luck or the almighty's mercy that helped many people survive the great deluge and severe cyclonic storm of April 29, 1991.

Almost unbelievable stories are now heard from some of the survivors who cannot yet clearly recall how they passed through the ordeal. The stories of some survivors are many and varied. Their experiences are the bitterest one and they shudder in fear to recollect the nightmare.

BSS Special Correspondent Nazir Ahmed who met a number of survivors during the past few days came to know such unbelievable occurrences in Kutubdia, Banshkhali, Chakaria and other places.

Shrimp project worker Azhar Ali (27), of Ujantia of Chakaria was one of the three survivors of a group of eight project workers. On the fateful night they were staying in a hut adjacent to the project off Badarkhali. The owner of project was also staying in a separate hut nearby, he has remained untraced till now.

Ali said, "It was midnight, the cyclone was severe and in the twinkling of an eye the deluge came with unthinkable speed. The hut was uprooted and floating and all of us caught hold of the thatched roof. But the roof was torn apart and I did not know what happened to my other companions. I was about to drown, but an earthen jar was floating before me and I caught hold of it."

Ali found himself in the morning on a big tree with its branches blown away by the cyclone. The tree was, in Chakoria, almost ten miles away from the Badarkhali shrimp project. He was rescued by some relief workers.

A three-month-old baby was found on the coconut tree at a village in Banshkhali upazila on the morning of April 29. Nobody knew how the baby climbed the coconut tree. It was rescued by the local people but no one knows whom the baby belongs to.

Eleven-year-old Jasim of Devpahar, Chittagong, went to Kutubdia with a bridal party of 19 people. Fifty per cent members of the bridal party are missing or dead. Jasim caught hold of a log of wood and was washed to Lishia of Chakoria. Jasim joined his parents with the memory of April 29 nightmare.

The Mohsin Aulia Dargah in Anwara was not affected by cyclone though it has thatched roof. The Charpir Aulia Dargah at Rustom hat in Barosa union of Anwara upazila also remained intact. People wonder to see both the Dargahs, remaining unaffected in such a severe cyclone, said S.M. Yunus, General Secretary of ten-acre Shrimp Culturists Association.

Noman visits affected areas

Another report from Cox's Bazar adds: State Minister for Fisheries Livestocks and Environment Abdullah Al-Noman on Saturday some cyclone and tidal surge hit areas of

Chakaria here and supervised relief and rehabilitation works there.

He also held a meeting at the Chakaria upazila headquarters with the upazila officials and local leaders where he said that the government would not tolerate any irregularity in distribution of relief and rehabilitation materials.

He instructed the concerned officials to put into operation 40 power pumps allotted to Chakaria upazila immediately. Noman visited Sowdagar Ghona near the upazila headquarters and saw relief activities there.

He also distributed some relief materials among the affected people.

One killed as bus falls into ditch

MEHERPUR, May 18: One person was killed and 50 others injured when a passenger bus skidded off the road into a road side ditch at Quinagar of Gangni upazila, 13 miles of here Saturday, reports UNB.

The victim Panga (22), helper of the bus (Dhaka Metro Cha-8981) died on the spot. The injured were admitted to Gangni Upazila Health Complex.

The accident occurred when the bus going towards Meherpur from Kushtia lost control and fell into the ditch. However, the driver fled away.

Feni gasfield production begins next month

BAKHRABAD, May 18: Commercial production in the Feni gasfield, which has a reserve of 200 billion cubic feet, will begin next month, reports BSS.

This was disclosed by State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Dr. Khondakar Mosharraf Hossain during his visit to Bakhrabad gasfield at Comilla Saturday. Managing Director of Bangladesh Gasfields Limited Bazul Karim was present.

The State Minister said the development work of Feni gasfield was undertaken during the rule of shahed President Ziaur Rahman in 1981 with the financial assistance from the Netherlands, Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. He said the development work was scheduled to be completed by 1984 but could not be accomplished because of negligence of the autocratic regime of Ershad.

Dr. Mosharraf said one well had already been dug in the Feni gasfield at a cost of Taka 20 crore by applying local technology. He said digging of another well would be undertaken soon under the Third Natural Gas Development Project.

Food poisoning

A minor girl died and 30 others fell ill due to food poisoning Tuesday night at Imampara village under Taraganj upazila in Rangpur district.

All victims took meal at a house where they were invited in connection with a marriage ceremony after taking meal they fell ill.

Of them, Rezaka (8) died. Upazila Health Officer said a seven member medical team is treating ailing persons.

Beggars on rise in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, May 19: Beggars are on the rise in the town and adjoining areas following influx of poor people from remote and cyclone affected areas.

According to the informed sources, these helpless people have trekked into the town with the hope of getting better earning. Dwellers complained that with onrush of these people infectious diseases and anti-social activities have recorded a sharp rise vitiating the social atmosphere and creating panic among the public.

Besides, small children have taken manual jobs in hotels and restaurants and in different machinery shops to

support their families squatting in slums.

Moreover, many young women of these families resorted to prostitution jeopardising the social fabric, residents alleged.

Town dwellers called for immediate rehabilitation of these people.

Betel leaf production has been adversely affected due to abnormal rise in the prices of inputs following natural calamities, shortage and absence of credit facilities.

Prices of inputs like bamboo, fertilizers, oil-cake and pesticides have shown a sharp rise declining production to a great extent in Katiadi, Hossainpur, Pakundia, Kishoreganj Sadar and Karimganj upazilas which are main producing areas.

Fund shortage has increased the sufferings of the growers. On the other hand, a section of dishonest bank officials have created bottlenecks in sanctioning loan and take gratification from the betel leaf growers.

Finding no other alternative the growers borrow money from the village money lenders at high rate of interest.

Bamboo production has fallen to a great extent in Kishoreganj district due to lack of proper maintenance and destruction of bamboo clusters. The price of a standard size bamboo is now between Taka 85 and Taka 100 which is beyond the purchasing capacity of the growers. The poor farmers sell their bamboo clusters in local markets as fuel.

Meanwhile, the traditional bamboo based cottage industries are on the verge of closure for want of bamboo.

Sirajganj town protection groyen may collapse

SIRAJGANJ, May 17: The Ranigram groyen on the town-protection embankment bent down due to an abrupt rise of water level in the Jamuna over the last 24 hours, officials said, reports UNB.

About 150 feet of the groyen was pressed down as the river swelled 12 cm due to onrush of water from upper riparian and incessant rains during the period, Water Development Board sources said.

They feared the groyen might collapse, if the current trend of rising water persists.

Meanwhile, about 200 families of seven upazilas of the district have been rendered homeless by unabated erosion by the rising Jamuna over the last 24 hours.

Journey by night coach hazardous to passengers

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, May 19: Madaripur-Dhaka highway is unsafe for night travel due to absence of security measures.

Every night numerous passengers, mostly businessmen and people from other professions, travel amid constant danger as dacoity has become an almost regular feature on this route. The coach services had armed Ansars previously but now they are absent. Many passengers were killed, beaten and robbed off all their belongings by dacoits who board coaches in the guise of passengers. The fare has also been raised considerably.

It is learnt that they choose a solitary place to commit dacoity. Besides, the dacoits use firearms, daggers and other lethal weapons to create panic among the innocent passengers.

A night coach on its way to Barisal from Dhaka recently was attacked by the bandits. The dacoits stopped the coach

at dagger point near Rajotr under Madaripur district and looted Taka 37,000 in cash. In another incident Meer Siddique Rahman driving a coach towards Madaripur from Dhaka was stabbed to death by 10 dacoits, but courageous driver saved the passengers by driving the coach speedily till his last breath. A police official was killed on Madaripur-Faridpur highway. The Bhurghata-Takerhat section of Barisal has become a vulnerable place where dacoits are active all the while.

In the meeting of the Law and Order Committee held recently the speakers suggested immediate deployment of armed security personnel in night coaches of Madaripur to Dhaka in order to combat crimes and to preserve the safety of passengers.

24 get life-term for murder
Mr. Zulfiqar Ali, District and

Sessions Judge, Madaripur sentenced 24 persons to life-term for killing one person recently.

According to the prosecution, Moktel Hossain was killed on March 3, 1987, during the clash that took place when Abdul Gafur of Ramzanpur in Kalkini upazila refused to sign the false master roll presented by the accused persons.

Moktel was seriously injured when hit by lethal weapons during the clash and he later died.

The Judge heard 27 witnesses and reviewed the documents and pronounced the verdict of life-term to the 24 persons.

Public Prosecutor, Nazrul Islam Miah conducted the prosecution case while Advocate Abdur Rahman Bakul stood for defence.



Underground water level in Pabna has fallen alarmingly following persistent drought. In desperation, the local people have dug a 10-foot hole on the ground and installed tubewell to lift water. — Star photo