

Upazila roundup

JHALAKATHI

13 primary schools will be built

June 12: A scheme is underway to construct 13 primary schools in four upazilas of the district as soon as possible, reports UNB.

The project was undertaken for implementation in the current fiscal year at a cost of Taka 55 lakh in Sadar, Rajapur, Nalchiti and Kathalia upazilas, according to sources.

Of the total, four each will be constructed in Sadar and Rajapur upazilas, three in Nalchiti and two in Kathalia upazilas.

About 4000 students will get facilities for primary education on completion of the project.

Embankment will be reconstructed

Water Development Board has taken up a project under Food for Works Programme to reconstruct a 31-km embankment damaged during the recent cyclone and tidal surge, reports UNB.

According to officials, 200 metric tons of wheat were also sanctioned for the successful implementation of the project. It is expected that about 10,000 acres of land in Sadar upazila will be saved from salinity and flood water after the completion of the project.

Another report adds: government has also sanctioned 500 metric tons of wheat under Test Relief Programme to reconstruct the damaged embankment in coastal area and offshore islands of Borguna district.

MAULVI BAZAR

Diarrhoea breaks out

June 12: Diarrhoea has broken out in an epidemic form at Rajhat tea estate under Sreemongal upazila.

The disease claimed seven lives in the tea garden till Tuesday. Deputy Commissioner and Civil Surgeon of Maulvi Bazar visited the affected area.

The Civil Surgeon told BSS that measures have been taken to check the disease an army medical team have been working in the garden.

2 killed in road mishap

UNB adds: Two passengers were killed on the spot and 45 others injured when a bus collided with a coaster on Dhaka-Sylhet highway near Lalbari on Friday, police said.

The injured were rushed to the Sylhet Medical College Hospital where some were released after first aid.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when the ill-fated bus (Dhaka-Ja 4604) trying to overtake a rickshaw hit the coaster coming from opposite direction.

One killed in road mishap

One passenger was killed and 16 others were injured when a coach skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch near Archi bridge in Kulara upazila, police said here Saturday, reports UNB.

The victim Kumudini Das (60) was killed in the incident last week while the injured passengers were admitted to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital.

The accident took place when the driver lost control of the vehicle, witnesses said.

A case has been filed with local police. The driver and helper of the bus, however, managed to escape.

FENI

Flood water submerges crops

June 12: Incessant rainfall and onrush of hilly waters submerged standing crops on about 15000 acres of land in five upazilas of the district over the last week, BADC officials said, reports UNB.

The affected upazilas are: Porshiram, Chhagalnaha, Sonagazi, Dagonbhuyan and Sadar. Officials till Tuesday recorded about 294 mm rainfall. Low lying areas were inundated damaging a number of kutch houses.

Besides, water level of the river Mohuri is on rise creating panic among the coastal people.

Meanwhile, prices of essentials have been showing upward trend due to heavy downpour. A section of unscrupulous businessmen have allegedly been creating artificial scarcity of essentials to earn maximum profit.

NETRAKONA

Businessman electrocuted

June 12: A local businessman was electrocuted Tuesday while trying to bring out some salt bags from his godown at Barhatta road of the town, reports UNB.

Family sources said the victim Swapan Kumar Shaha (35), suddenly came in contact with a live electric wire and raised alarm. He was rushed to the sadar hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

The body was sent to morgue for autopsy and a case of unnatural death was filed in this connection.

KISHOREGANJ

Development work reviewed

From Our Correspondent June 12: The monthly meeting of the Kishoreganj district Development Co-ordination Committee was held at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner, Kishoreganj on Saturday last.

Kazi Nasrul Islam, Deputy Commissioner, who is also the ex-officio President of the Committee presided over it while Md Lutfur Rahman, Superintendent of Police, Md Ibrahim Khan, ADC (Rev), A S M Ruhul Amin, DAE, the district level officials, UNO, and Upazila Chairman attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the development work and the problems facing the development projects.

Threadbare discussions were held on development projects in various sectors including agriculture, transport and communication, health and family planning, education etc.

C'NAWABGANJ

10 smugglers arrested

June 12: At least 10 alleged smugglers arrested and contraband worth over Taka 70 lakh seized in separate drives by Bangladesh Rifles last month, reports UNB.

The contraband including Indian sarees, cosmetics, motor parts, animal skins, sugar, match boxes, onion, spices and dry chilli were later handed over to local customs department.

JHENIDAH

Body recovered

June 12: Police Monday recovered the body of an unidentified woman from a bungalow in Sadar upazila, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police went to the bungalow near Jhenidah-Chuadanga highway and recovered the body which bore marks of injuries.

Police sent the body to Sadar Hospital for autopsy and a case was also filed in this connection.

CHANDPUR

Unidentified girl commits suicide

June 12: An unidentified young girl killed herself jumping from a Chandpur bound launch into the midstream of the Meghna, police here said, reports UNB.

Passengers said they saw the girl, wearing a Kamij with a magazine in hand, standing at the edge of the deck of the launch M V Eagle before jumping into the river in the afternoon of June 6.

Soon after the incident, the launch sailing from Dhaka was stopped and some of the passengers dived to rescue the girl but failed.

PABNA

Sarbahara Party activist held

June 12: Police Sunday arrested an activist of the outlawed Sarbahara Party and recovered arms and ammunition from his possession at Luximpur village in Aithoria upazila here, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police raided a house in the village and nabbed Lokman Hossain (40), alongwith the weapons which included one SLR, one pistol and three rounds of bullets.

A case was filed with local police in this connection.

Corruption charge

Corruption charges against UP Chairman was brought forth by the villagers at B L Bari Union under Faridpur upazila in Pabna recently.

The villagers demanded punishment for the eight members including UP Chairman for misconduct, and misappropriation of money and power misuse.



US Marines load relief supplies aboard a UH-1N Huey Helicopter at Chittagong. The supplies were taken to outlying areas, where residents are living with the devastation of recent cyclone. — USIS photo

Debt-ridden farmers sell standing paddy

MADARIPUR, June 12: Farmers are selling away ripe standing paddy at a very low price before harvesting in Madaripur and Shariatpur districts.

Farmers are debt ridden for cultivation of Irri, Boro paddy. They have no other alternative but to sell their standing paddy to a section of financially solvent men at a very low price to meet up the expenditure of irrigation inputs like diesel, seedlings, fertilizer and irrigation water etc.

The irrigation dealers have increased the rate of irrigation water taking advantage of hike in prices of diesel.

Besides, due to severe drought in the region the farmers were compelled to purchase double irrigation water on credit from water dealers.

It is also learnt that some unscrupulous fertilizer dealers have created artificial crisis of the item causing the price hike of the item. The paddy

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From Our Correspondent

growers are burdened with debt and failed to earn minimum profit.

Child labourers

The number of child labourers is increasing in Madaripur and Shariatpur districts day by day.

These under aged boys are compelled to take odd jobs for mere survival. The minor boys under 12 are working as helpers in construction sites, hotels, restaurants, bike facto-

ries, tea stalls and motor granges, ripsaw garages, bicycle repair workshops, welding workshops and bakeries.

Besides, many child labourers work as shoe shine boys, domestic servants, coolies, hawkers etc.

The actual number of child labourers are nearly 50,000 in two districts.

Many of these children are either school drop-outs or have left schools due to economic hardships.

Fodder scarce in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, June 12: Acute shortage of fodder has been prevailing throughout the district specially in the haor areas ruining the health of domestic animals.

It is learnt that the acute shortage of fodder is the result of large scale damage of straw by excessive and incessant rain during the last boro harvesting season.

Cultivators in these areas preserve their year's stock of straw from the boro harvest but this year it was not possible on account of incessant rains. Now straw has become a luxury to the cattle of the district.

Cultivators are unable to feed their cattle regularly moreover, traditional grazing fields have been turned into agricultural lands in all the 13

upazilas of the district without any consideration about cattle feeding.

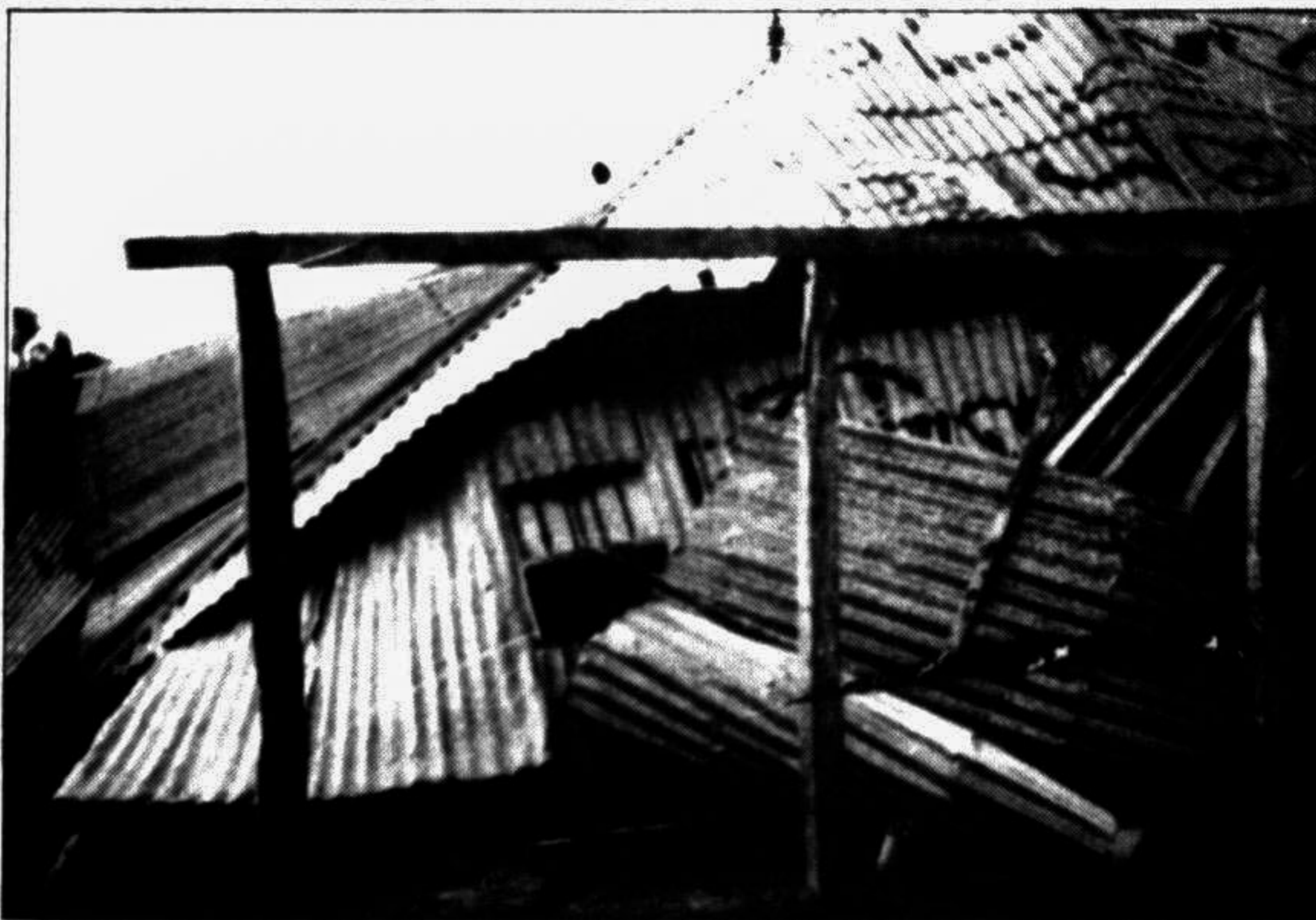
According to the farmers, fresh grass for milch cows is not available in the rural areas because most lands are being brought under cultivation with the introduction of mechanised system. Crop pattern has also been changed. Prices of oil cake, hush, bran and other varieties of fodder have also been increased. As a result, thousands of cattleheads throughout the district have already been reduced to skin and bone. A large number of cattle has fallen prey to various diseases due to constant starvation.

Many cultivators are selling off their cattle at a very low prices as they are unable to feed their cattle.

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PABNA: A tornado damaged house at the outskirts of the town. — Star photo

Universal primary edn faces setback

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, June 12: The Universal Primary Education Programme is facing serious setback in all upazilas of Chandpur district. The dilapidated condition of primary school buildings, inadequate furniture, scarcity of teachers are the main cause of failure of the programme.

Moreover, abnormal high prices of educational appliances, financial crisis, poverty and other social factors are

also hampering education in the rural areas. The primary schools damaged by the floods, storms, cyclones and other natural calamities during the last few years have not yet been repaired. Besides, primary school students taken their lessons either by standing or sitting on the floor due to lack of adequate furniture. Roofs of many schools have been damaged. Besides, tubewells and pucca toilets are

Relief operation continues

From A Correspondent

KUSHTIA, June 12: Relief operation in the cyclone hit area of southern Bangladesh conducted by Kushtia district administration under the leadership of Sekendar Ali Mondol. Additional District Magistrate, Kushtia has left a tremendous impact upon the affected people of Barisal and Bhola.

Disclosing this Syed Hafiz Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner, Kushtia told this correspondent that continuous sending of essential goods and subsequent distribution among the affected people in a discipline manner has helped bringing back hopes and aspiration among the people to live again on the ruins of devastation.

Giving details of relief materials sent to the affected area Deputy Commissioner said that five trucks load of goods worth about Taka 11 lakh have been sent so far from Kushtia district. More relief materials are being procured for further despatch, he added.

A charity football game was arranged at Kushtia stadium ground and people of Kushtia responded wholeheartedly in making the effort a success.

Deputy Commissioner appreciated generous help extended in cash and kind by Bheramara and Kumarkhali Upazila Parishad and expressed his thanks and gratitude to the people of Kumarkhali and Bheramara for generating fund for relief efforts.

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Growers apathetic to jute cultivation

JHENIDAH, June 12: The target of jute cultivation is not achieved in six upazilas of Jhenidah district as the growers are apathetic to jute farming. Having been deprived of fair price of jute last year, the growers of Jhenidah district have reduced their jute cultivation programme.

According to District Agriculture Extension Department (AED), 41,500 acres of land had been fixed up for jute cultivation in six upazilas of Jhenidah district. But only 14965 acres of land could be brought under the programme as against 32200 acres last year.

The upazilawise breakup of the cultivated land is as follows: Jhenidah Sadar 520 acres, Shalakup 2270 acres, Harinakunda 1085 acres, Kaliganj 2200 acres, Kotehandpur 990 acres and Moheshpur 7900 acres.

Talking to this correspondent the district agriculture officials opined that prolonged drought was the main cause for unexpected fall in acreage of jute cultivation in the area.

Some farmers complained that production costs did not cover sale proceeds last year.

Sugar remain stockpiled

About 48 metric tons of sugar worth about Taka 12.5 lakh are being damaged in the godown of Food Department in Shalakup, Kaliganj upazilas of the district.

The sugar kept in gunny bags in the food godowns remain stockpiled for the last two years as the nation dealers did not lift the commodity due to high price.

It may be mentioned here that Indian sugar has captured the markets throughout the district and it is available at cheaper price than that of own sugar.

Meanwhile, 30 perfect of sugar in the godown already been melted due to bad weather and the remaining sugar may become unfit for use shortly, officials of the department said.

Resignation of headmistress demanded

SIRAJGANJ, June 12: About 300 students of Jamtoll-Dhopakandi Girls High School in Kamarkhand upazila Monday brought out a procession demanding resignation of their headmistress, reports UNB.

Feroza Begum, the Headmistress who was suspended by the Managing Committee last February on charges of various allegations has allegedly been creating problems for the school for the last six months.

The processionists paraded the main thoroughfares of the upazila and chanted various slogans in favour of their demand.

Students also complained that the teachers of the school were very irregular in taking their classes due to irregular payment of their salary for the last five months.

The teachers also complained that they were not getting salary for last few months due to non-cooperation of the Headmistress. The situation aggravated further due to resignation of the Managing Committee Chairman Dr Shakhawat Hossain on February 9.

Crops damaged in Nalitabari

From A Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 12: Standing crops on few hundreds acres of lands in the villages of Nischintapur, Kachimou, Chandanga and adjoining areas in Nalitabari Upazila under Sherpur District were damaged following torrential rain on rush of water from the hilly areas recently.

Besides, standing crops on thousands acres of land were razed to the ground due to the total damage of the Chellakhali river embankment and a huge quantity of paddy ready for harvesting were also damaged. About one hundred acres of lands belonging to Al-Haj Abdul Motaleb and Al-Haj Md. Keramat Ali also went under sand there.

The local MP, Motia Chowdhury and Upazila Chairman, Professor Taher Chowdhury visited the damaged embankment few days back and instructed the relevant authority to repair the embankment. But later the embankment was totally damaged following incessant rain and on rush of waters from the hilly areas.

The affected peasants of the locality urged the government to under take the repair work of the embankment immediately.

Training on agri-journalism

AGRI-VARSITY (Mymensingh); June 12: A two-week long training course on Agricultural Journalism began at Graduate Training Institute (GTI) Auditorium in Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, recently.

Gias Kamal Chowdhury, former President of Dhaka Press Club spoke in the opening ceremony. He spoke on Basic concept of journalism, tips for effective journalism, problem of communication and influence of source for effective communication.

Prof. Mustafizur Rahman, Director, GTI presided over the opening ceremony. Md Amir Hossain and Dr Md Jobed Ali Mirza are co-ordinating the course. Twenty-four journalists from different dailies and public relations personnel from different organisations took part in the training course.

Road in bad shape

Assured road in the district is in a deplorable condition causing obstacles to the vehicular movement. The 25-km road was metalled in the early sixties but for want of proper repair and maintenance the road has become hazardous. The road has developed innumerable potholes restraining all kinds of vehicles to ply.

Roadside hotels

Mushroom growth of roadside hotels and restaurants in the district has long been posing threat to public health. Most of these hotels and restaurants have sprung up by the side of the lanes and by-lanes amid unhygienic condition. These unplanned hotels are also hindering smooth movement of transport. It is alleged that pourashava authority is least bothered of this matter.

Notes from Satkhira

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, June 12: The number of Heroin addicts has increased in the district.

A large number of young people are getting addicted to heroin. In the process the young generation is getting demoralised but no pragmatic steps have yet been taken to curb the menace. This has created alarms among the guardians.

Hospital in disarray

The 50-bed general hospital in Satkhira is now in a mess and running without necessary medicines and materials.

According to the doctors both indoor and outdoor patients are being served with prescriptions only. The indoor patients are provided treatment with medicines purchased by themselves. Besides, they have to purchase all other materials required for even minor operations.

On the other hand the drains are not cleaned regularly. The condition of the isolation ward is very deplorable. There is no blood bank in the hospital and it becomes impossible for patients to procure blood in time in need.

There is no discipline in the hospital management resulting in on rush of visitors regularly. Even pyedogs are found in the hospital building roaming here and there.

Stomach and skin ailments have broken out alarmingly in the district due to consumption of adulterated food stuff. This is more prevalent in village huts and bazars where food stuffs are being sold in uncovered condition.

Informed sources said that spurious edible oil including mustard oil, butter oil and milk were being openly sold at random.

According to the hospital sources