

Upazila roundup

BARISAL

Indian fuel available in market

Dec 6: Indian diesel and kerosine oil have become the most attractive items of illegal trade here through the Sundarban areas, reports UNB. According to sources, trawlers and country boats are widely used to smuggle these items along with saree, lungi, electronic items, charge lights, synthetic cloths, cosmetics and umbrellas. Diesel and kerosine oil from India are available in southern region cheaper than those supplied from the local depots following devaluation of Indian rupee recently.

Another report adds: Abu Taher (27) of village Baishal of Banaripara Upazila of the district was killed by the outlawed Sharbahara Party activists on November 27.

Family sources said, a group of armed activists forced Abu Taher out of his house near Jamaluddin High School at Iluhar and killed him with a sharp weapon on the spot.

A case has been registered with the local police in this connection. None was arrested as yet.

COMILLA

Potato farming

Dec 6: Potato will be cultivated in 44,500 acres in Comilla District during the current season, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the agriculture department will sell 110,000 kgs of seeds to the potato growers.

CHUADANGA

Boy killed in road accident

Dec 6: A teenage carrot seller was crushed to death Sunday under the wheels of a speeding truck at Joyrampur of Damurhuda Upazila of the district, police said, reports UNB.

The victim Ansar Ali (15) was returning home by a van after selling carrot at Dugdugi Bazar while the killer Kaliganj bound truck (No Jessore TA-291) hit the van from behind. He died instantly.

A case was registered with upazila police in this connection.

BORGUNA

40,000 children suffering from malnutrition

Dec 6: About 40,000 children of different age groups are suffering from malnutrition in five upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

According to a survey report conducted by a non-government organisation, malnutrition in children has been spreading in these areas after the recent devastating flood.

Blindness and other nutrition-related diseases have been reported in a large-scale among the children.

RANGPUR

Rice traders observe hartal

Dec 6: About one thousand rice traders of Mahiganj in Rangpur Paurashava area Wednesday observed dawn-to-dusk token strike in protest against forcible collection of tolls by a section of unruly transport workers, reports BSS.

Striking rice traders paraded throughfares of town demanding halt to such illegal toll collection by so-called transport workers rice mill owners, whole sellers and labourers also participated in the parade.

Situated about three miles off Rangpur main town, Mahiganj is famous for rice trade around ten thousand bags of rice are sold in Mahiganj daily.

MADARIPUR

Migratory birds

Dec 6: With the onset of winter, guest birds are seen plenty in the canals, beels and haors of four upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

About 300 species of winter migratory birds usually throng different water bodies of Sadar, Kalkini, Shuchar and Rajor upazilas of the district, according to a bird-watcher.

These birds locally known as Dighari, Pigger, Kalighar, Sarais, Balishush, Pankauri, Kusira, Platimus, Rad Dang and Karis fly into Bangladesh every year from the cold regions of the north especially Siberia.

But local bird catchers and amateur hunters, have been killing these birds indiscriminately violating the government ban.

MEHERPUR

Workshops on social forestry

Dec 6: Two five-day workshops on social afforestation were held at Meherpur and Chuadanga recently, reports BSS.

Organised by the Forest Department the workshops were participated by the upazila level officers. The workshops aimed at adopting massive afforestation schemes in the rural areas for socio-economic development of the country.

Another report says: Contraband goods worth more than Taka one lakh were seized by the law enforcing agency personnel from a night coach near Meherpur town recently.

Nine was arrested in this connection. A case has been registered with Meherpur thana.

RANGAMATI

Tk 12 lakh timber seized

Dec 6: Forest officials have seized about four thousand cubic feet of timber valued at Taka 12 lakh, illegally extracted from the reserve forest of Kaptai, reports UNB.

They also seized two elephants which were being used in stealing timber from the restricted forests in the last two months, officials said.

A statement by the Gono Karmo Nirbahi Samity, however, alleged that forest officials were subjected to harassment for strengthening vigilance on illegal extraction.

The statement issued by Wazuddin, Chairman and Mohiuddin Bhuiyan, General Secretary of the samity Monday categorically denied the allegation that forest officials were involved in the recent killing of an elephant and injuring its calf on November 29.

Armed wood pilferers or tribal miscreants might have killed the animal, the statement added.

SATKHIRA

Tigers kill 4 fishermen

Dec 6: Tigers killed four fishermen of Munshiganj village in Shyamnagar Upazila of the district during last three days, reports UNB.

According to family sources, the victims met the tragic end while they were fishing in the river near Sundarban area. The victims were identified as Pagal (50), Khokan (30), Santosh (35), and Gaffar (28).

Local people said the number of man-eaters has increased alarmingly in the area causing panic among the fishermen and wood-cutters.

PATUAKHALI

Road repairing plan taken up

Dec 6: Roads and Highways (RAH) Department has taken up a programme to repair certain portion of Amtali-Khepupara-Kukati road in the current financial year, reports UNB.

Official sources said the work on the road is being undertaken under post-flood rehabilitation scheme with the financial assistance of Asian Development Bank.

An estimated amount of Taka 1.60 crore would spent for implementing the project.

PABNA

Diarrhoea claims 17 people

Dec 6: Diarrhoea and gastro-intestinal diseases claimed 17 people and attacked 1000 more during the last week, officials said here on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Of them, 3 people died in Sadar, 6 in Chatmohar, 1 in Faridpur and 6 in Santhia upazilas.

District Civil Surgeon, Md Adhuzaman informed, a total of 66 medical teams has been working in the affected areas.

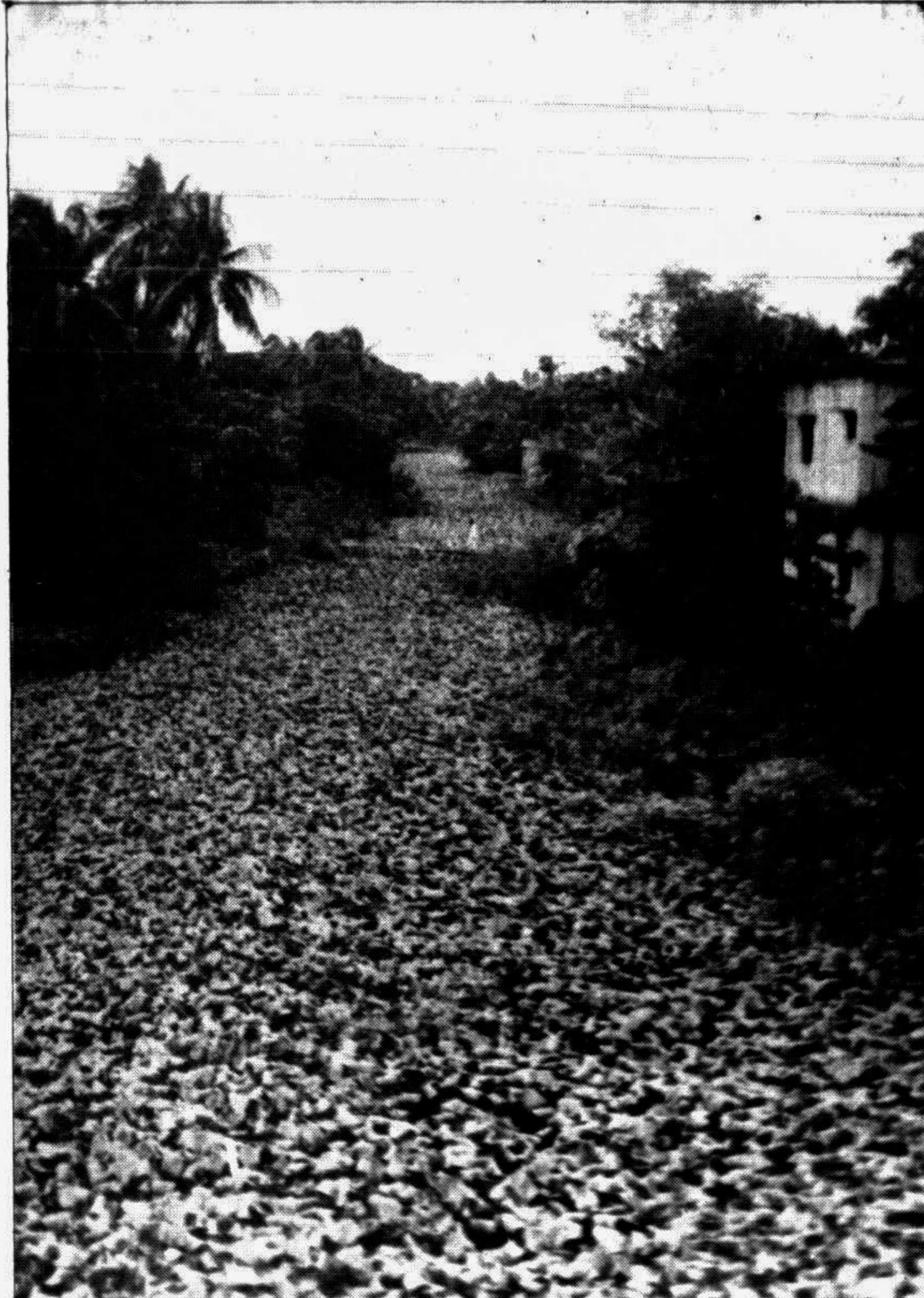
Scarcity of drinking water and taking of adulterated food were attributed to the outbreak of the diseases.

Union executives

Another report adds: The district motor workers' union election was held here in the annual general meeting Tuesday.

Md Rafiqul Islam Rafique and Md Wazuddin Khan were elected President and General Secretary respectively of the union.

Other office bearers are: Vice President - Md Shamshur Rahman Shapon and Abdus Samad, Joint Secretary - Hafizur Rahman Hafiz and Ashraf Hossain Rabi, Organising Secretary - Md Razab Ratsuddin and Md Alam Treasurer, Sree Kanailal Sarkar Karna.



PABNA: Ichamati River — now a mosquito-breeding centre —bank to bank covered with waterhyacinth. —Star photo

Rice, wheat worth Tk 16 lakh missing from govt godown

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Dec 6: About 3500 maunds of foodgrains worth about Taka 16 lakh have been missing from the LSD godown at Hatgopalpur under Jhenidah sadar upazila.

The missing of the foodgrains was found when the new OC of the godown was taking his charge.

The said quantity of foodgrains has been missing during the four-year service of former in-charge, Mr. Sahabuddin, it is alleged.

However, 950 maunds of foodgrains have been adjusted by the concerned department as movement and handling shortage. Out of the remaining amount, 2100 maunds are rice and 450 maunds are wheat.

During investigation, only two tons of rice were found instead of 88 tons while 16 tons of wheat are missing.

When contacted, Upazila Food Officer, the Acting DC of Food, Jhenidah who did not want to be identified declined to give any detailed information but they admitted that departmental investigation was going on in this regard.

The concerned officer, Sahabuddin Ahmed is now under suspension, they informed.

Rabi crop farming

A scheme has been taken up to bring 78,418 acres of land under the cultivation of different varieties of pulses in six upazilas of the district during the current rabi crop farming.

According to Agricultural Extension Department, out of the total, lentil will be cultivated in 44,134 acres of land with a production target of 11,659 metric ton, khesari in 7,050 acres of land with a production target of 1,875 tons, gram in 19,871 acres of land with a production target of 4,669 tons, mug in 1,336 acres of land with a production target of 462 tons, mashkai in 5,533 acres of land with a production target of 1,427 tons and arhar in 494 acres with a

production target of 118 tons. It may be mentioned here that a total of 40,280 acres of land was brought under the different kinds of pulses cultivation during the last rabi crop cultivation.

District Agricultural Extension Department has decided to take up 431 demonstration plots in six upazilas of the district.

12 killed in mishaps

A UNB report says: At least 12 people died in separate incidents in Sadar and Shaikakupa upazilas during the last week of November.

According to police records, of the total, two were gunned down, three died in road accidents, one in snake bite and the rest six allegedly committed suicide.

The sources said, Amirul Islam (25) of village Ghorshal and Abdul Hakim Khan (40) of village Kaluhati in Sadar upazila were gunned down by unknown assailants on November

23 and 27. Abdur Rahman (35), of village Bhuyapara, Shaful (25), of village Kacherkole and Sakina (6), of Faridpur village were killed in three separate road mishaps in the same upazila on November 27 and 29.

Another China Khatun (14), of Jhenidah town died by snake bite. Besides, five housewives - Nesputi Begum (18), wife of Sabdar Rahman of village Shehabaria, Gulnaha (20), wife of Mansur Ahmed of village Sitalidanga, Hamida Khatun (18), wife of Idris Ali of village Kashimpur, Rabeya Khatun (18), wife of Shahidul Islam of village Mirjapur and Jarina Khatun, wife of Obed Ali of village Dhulapara and Md Hasan (30), of village Noapara, all in Shaikakupa upazila allegedly committed suicide by taking poison.

Separate cases were recorded with respective police stations.

UP Chairman faces no-confidence

RANGAMATI, Dec 6: Members of the Mainmukh Union Parishad of Langadu Upazila of the district have expressed no-confidence on the Chairman and demanded his immediate dismissal, reports UNB.

Condition of Borguna markets pitiable

From Our Correspondent

BORGUNA, Dec 6: Most of the hats and bazars in Betagi Upazila are now in a pitiable condition causing untold sufferings to both the buyers and sellers, reports UNB.

Lack of proper care and maintenance by the authorities are said to be the cause of gradual deterioration of their condition.

Betagi Bazar, Hosnabad Hat, Mokamia Hat, Chandkhali Hat, Kazirhat and Golsha Hat are the main markets where the people in the area carry out big transactions everyday.

It is learnt that these markets were set up at the local initiatives when the population of the respective area was thin. But with manifold increase of the population no proportionate extension has been made.

Besides, insufficient accommodation in these hats and bazars is a great problem which creates obstacle for movement of the buyers and sellers.

In the rainy season almost all hats and bazars go under water and become muddy and slippery after slight rainfall. In absence of proper drainage system the rain water remains stagnant for days together.

Besides, paucity of drinking water is very acute in these hats and bazars. Most of the hats and bazars have no tubewell putting the market goers and traders into immense trouble.

Filth and garbage are not cleared regularly polluting the environment and people defecate on roadsides in absence of latrines and urinal.

Fishermen need patronisation

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Dec 6: The fishermen of the seven upazilas of the district have been facing various problems.

About 50,000 fishermen of the district are even thinking of leaving their ancestral profession as they can hardly earn their livelihood.

The fishermen are hard-hit due to shortage of fund, non-availability and price hike of the fishing appliances.

A fishing boat and a net cost minimum Taka one lakh which some fishermen informed that it was beyond their purchasing capacity.

The sufferings of the fishermen has helped the decline of fish supply to the markets greatly.

The abnormal prices of fishing nets, boats and other related appliances have crippled the economic condition of people of this profession, some fishermen informed.

The fishermen of the district told that they had been deprived of the government financial help.

About 20,000 fishermen in Faridganj upazila alone were deprived of natural fishing on the river Dakatia due to the construction of Chandpur irrigation embankment. Fishing in the river has also become almost difficult due to massive siltation and unplanned irrigation.

Meanwhile, a large number of fishermen in the district have left their profession, it is learnt.

Seven bank officials sued for defalcation

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 6: District Anti-corruption Bureau has filed three separate cases against seven bank officials and two project Chairmen of charges of defalcation of money and misappropriation of foodgrains, reports UNB.

Official source said, seven employees of the Ullapara Krishi Bank were allegedly involved in defalcating over Tk 45 lakh from Ullapara Polly Biddut Samity's deposit in the last four years.

Pests damage sugarcane on 50,000 acres

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, Dec 6: The sugarcane plants on 50,000 acres of land under different upazilas of greater Dinajpur district have been attacked by pests.

It is learnt that the sugarcane fields had almost become yellow by the massive attack.

A total of fifty thousand acres of land was brought under sugarcane cultivation in Panchagarh, Thakurgaon and Setabganj sugar mill zone areas for the coming crushing season. Out of the total, the sugar mill authorities cultivated sugarcane in ten thousand acres.

It may be mentioned here that a total of 45,000 acres of land was brought under the sugarcane farming last year.

When contacted the mill authorities informed this correspondent that the authorities have taken necessary steps. They further disclosed that stagnant water in the fields had affected the sugarcane plants.

Some sugarcane growers of Panchagarh mills zone area, told this correspondent that no one has so far visited the affected area.

One farmer of Mangalpur said that he could not purchase the requisite quantity of pesticides. The high price of the spray machines also affected the anti-pest measure.

Some growers complained that the pesticides supplied by the mill authorities were not

Teestamuk-Bahadurabad ferry service Dredging needed on emergency-basis

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Dec 6: The railway ferry service between Teestamuk Ghat and Bahadurabad is about to be closed as the Brahmaputra river has become silted up.

The water level of the river Brahmaputra becomes very much low during the dry season for the last few years. The ferry boats ply very slowly to avoid any mishap. Moreover, innumerable shoals have developed at different points on the ferry route. During this lean period, the ferry boats have to cross about 40 miles distance for the shoals and it takes over three hours time to cross. As a result, the trains on this route become late.

Very often especially at night time the boats run aground and are detained for hours together leaving the passengers to untold sufferings. The Railway Department every year has to change the ghaats for the new shoals and it costs a huge amount of money.

The huge sediment comes from the erosion of the river bed and shoals are being developed. As a result smooth plying of ferry boats are greatly hampered.

In the winter season, the channel becomes so narrow that the ferry boats can not move freely. The rail services between the capital city and northern districts can not maintain any time-schedule.

It may be mentioned that no election in 7 union parishes of the said upazila will be held like all other upazilas of the country as announced by the Election Commissioner.

There are 368 government and 350 non-government primary schools in the district.

Exhibition of cross-breed animals and birds was held at Daperhat Animal and Bird Welfare Centre under Sadullapur Upazila recently.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Sarker, Deputy Director, Livestock Department, Rajshahi was present on the occasion as chief guest.