

District roundup

NOAKHALI

BKB disburses
Tk 4.19 crore
as loan

June 16: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has disbursed agricultural loan of Taka about 4.19 crore to more than five thousand farmers in six thanas of Noakhali district during the fiscal year 1992-93, official sources here said, reports UNB.

The bank, through its 17 branches in the region, has realised about Taka 5.45 crore out of Taka 10.68 crore from three hundred and fifteen farmers.

However, the total unpaid loan of the bank amounts to about Taka 33 crore.

NAOGAON

Press club
polls held

June 16: An eight-member executive committee of Badalgachi Thana Press Club was elected recently.

Md Ferdous Hossain, Md Wazed Ali and Mizanur Rahman Khasru were elected President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively for three years term.

FENI

Former BCL
leader joins
BNP

June 16: A former Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader and Vice Chairman of Feni Pourashava formally joined the ruling BNP recently, reports UNB.

The former Chhatra League District President Nurul Absar joined the Bangladesh Nationalist Party expressing his full support and confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleida Zia.

Meanwhile, local BNP leaders including district unit Juba Dal President Abul Kalam Azad and Secretary Reza Ahmed Kazi and district unit JCD President Syed Mizanur Rahman congratulated him on his joining.

COMILLA

All set to hold
HSC exams

June 16: The stage is almost set to smoothly hold the ensuing HSC Examination scheduled to begin on June 17, reports UNB.

A meeting of law and order committee was held in the DC's Conference Room on June 8 with the Deputy Commissioner in the chair.

The meeting took some decisions, including formation of vigilance teams to inspect the examination centres for checking unfair means and peaceful holding of the examination.

A total of 80,454 examinees including 25,686 females would appear in the examination in 174 centres this year under the Board of Comilla.

Of the candidates, 52,200 are in Humanities, 14,499 in Science, 13,609 in Commerce and 91 in Agriculture groups.

MADARIPUR

PHE to install
4 thousand
tubewells

June 16: The Public Health Engineering (PHE) department will install about 4,000 tubewells in the rural areas of 11 southern districts of the country to supply pure drinking water during the current financial year, reports UNB.

Under the UNICEF funded project, 1,395 Deep Tube-Well (DTW) and 2,500 Shallow Tube-Well (STW) will be installed in Madaripur, Barisal, Faridpur, Bhola, Jhalakathi, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Shariatpur, Rajbari and Gopalganj.

They will also re-sink 1,800 STW in the region during the period.

More than 42,000 tubewell were installed in the region last financial year which included 40,000 STW and more than 2,500 DTW officials of the Public Health Engineering department here said.

BARISAL

UP chairmen
discussion held

June 16: The monthly discussion of the chairmen of 85 union parishads of Barisal district was held Thursday in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting was attended among others by ADC (General), Additional Director, local government and live-stock officers.

The meeting discussed about tax collection procedures, and development of domestic animals and agriculture.

MEHERPUR

Annual rally
of Ansar, VDP

June 16: Annual rally of Ansar and members of the Village Defence Party (VDP) of Meherpur district was held recently at the Ansar and VDP office premises here, reports BSS.

Director Ansar and VDP, Alhaj M Solaiman, was chief guest at the rally. Deputy Director Khulna Division, Mohammad Ruhul Amin and Agronomist Jahiruddin Talukdar were special guests.

Presided over by Hashem Ali Khan, the rally was addressed among others by District Adjutant AKM Khademul Islam, Civil Surgeon Aminul Islam and Circle Adjutant Mohammad Waliuzzaman.

About 500 Ansar and VDP members participated in the rally.

MAGURA

Clash leaves
two injured

June 16: Two people were wounded and a house was looted when two rival groups clashed over playing of cards at Jagdal village on Sunday, police said, reports UNB.

Villagers said the clash ensued following an altercation between supporters of Minhaz Mondal of Jagdal village and Abdur Rouf of Azampur village.

At one stage, supporters of Rouf attacked the rival Minhaz group, set fire on the house where they were playing cards, and looted the house including cash money of Tk 12 thousand and four cattle-heads.

Cases were filed by both the groups with local police station in this connection.

THAKURGAON

Work on 36
schemes
nearing
completion

June 16: Work on 36 development schemes taken up by the Local Government Engineering Bureau (LGOEB) at a cost of Taka 8,37,21,118 in five thanas of Thakurgaon district will be completed soon, reports BSS.

An officials source said the schemes include 36.79 km pucca road, 19 RCC box culverts, two pipe culverts and one growth centre.

The work of these schemes will be completed within a month, the source added.

CHITTAGONG

Two killed,
3 injured

June 16: Two persons were killed and three other were injured when a group of miscreants opened fire on them at Jallapathar under Daboa Union of Rajshahi thana today, reports BSS.

According to a district police source, when a group of youth was gossiping in a farmhouse the miscreants suddenly, numbering 10, opened fire on them, as a result two received serious bullet injuries. Of them, one Sanjit Biswas died on way to Rajshahi Health Complex, while his younger brother Bito Biswas succumbed to injury on way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

The police source said that immediately after the incident miscreants fled away and took shelter at nearby will.

Of the injured, two were identified as Lito Biswas and Abdul- al Kader.

No one was arrested till the filing of the report.

RAJSHAHI

Course on
development
works in
women affairs

June 16: A week long training course on flourishing of leadership of NGO representatives organised by Women's Affairs Department, Rajshahi began here Tuesday, reports BSS.

The main objective of the course is to train the NGO workers to enable them to carry forward the development programmes of Women's Affairs Department aimed at ensuring women's participation in socio-economic uplift activities.

A total of 35 representative of various NGOs registered by Women's Affairs Department from Rajshahi, Natore, Nagaon and Chapainawabganj districts are participating in the course.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Rajshahi Badruzzaman Mia Bir Pratik inaugurated the course. The inaugural session of the course was addressed, among others, by District Women's Affairs Officer, Firoza Khanam, Prof Sultana Razia, Prof Lutfunnessa Bari and Dr Sultan Ahmed.



HABIGANJ: Badly damaged railway track near Laskarpur in the district. There are a number of similar scenes throughout the district. — Star photo

Effects of Monu River Irrigation Project

Crops of 56 thousand acres
of land under water

MOULVIBAZAR, June 16: It's now a well known fact that Moulvibazar district is a region where flood is a regular phenomenon. Every year floods in the district engulf large areas and raise pans of the victims as well as cost the government crores of taka.

The river of Monu has become 'the sorrow' of the people living in the district of Moulvibazar. Every year lakhs of the people specially those who live on both sides of river including dwellers of Moulvibazar district town are affected.

Flash flood in the district this year has taken a devastating turn engulfing fresh areas and increasing the sufferings of the people in the area.

Our Daily Star correspondent recently visited some flood affected areas of Sadar and Rajnagar thanas and found people of the areas still living on the Monu river embankment or on bamboo made machans. The entire district of 600 square miles are submerged and 3.50 lakh people are said to be marooned by flood water. Some people are still awaiting for relief items.

Meanwhile the Monu River Irrigation Project completed in 1982-83 at a cost of Taka 68 crore failed to achieve its goal. About 40 thousand out of 56 thousand acres of paddy land under Sadar and Rajnagar thanas within the Monu River Project area are still under flood water since June 8.

The 36-78 mile long embankment was constructed around 'Kawadighi Haor' within Sadar and Rajnagar thanas to protect crops of 56 thousand acres of land and also some villages from flood water. But, crop land and villages around project areas are flooded every monsoon.

The Kasimpur pump house at 'Karadar' canal at the mouth of the haor was constructed at an estimated cost of Taka 20 crore to drain out the excess water from the Monu Project area for protection of crops, but 'Kasimpur Pump House' remains inoperative due to high water level.

People living in the villages at the right bank of the Monu river expressed that the project, benefitting no one, causing untold sufferings to the

people of 50 villages from the Tengra union of Rajnagar thana to Akhalkura union of Sadar thana which are situated out side the Monu Project area.

People of Chadnighat and Akhalkura of Moulvibazar thana and Kamarchak of Rajnagar thana said they are the victims of the project. 50

villages of two thanas are blocked by two embankments, one is the river bank embankment and other one is Monu project embankment. When the river bank embankment was washed away by recent flood water, these villages went under deep water. Even roofs of their houses have gone under water.

The dwellers of Moulvibazar district town have also expressed that the Monu River Irrigation Project is a utter failure for its wrongs planning. The authority concerned did not think of possible side-effect of the project. Water Development Board (WDB) wanted to protect paddy land from flood totally ignoring the human habitation around the project area. In the name of flood control, Moulvibazar district town along with other villages has also been neglected by the authorities.

There were hundreds of canals which linked the Monu River with 'Kawadighi Haor' and excess water of from the River had been drained out to the haor through these canals during every monsoon. But since start of the project, out lets of the canals were affected.

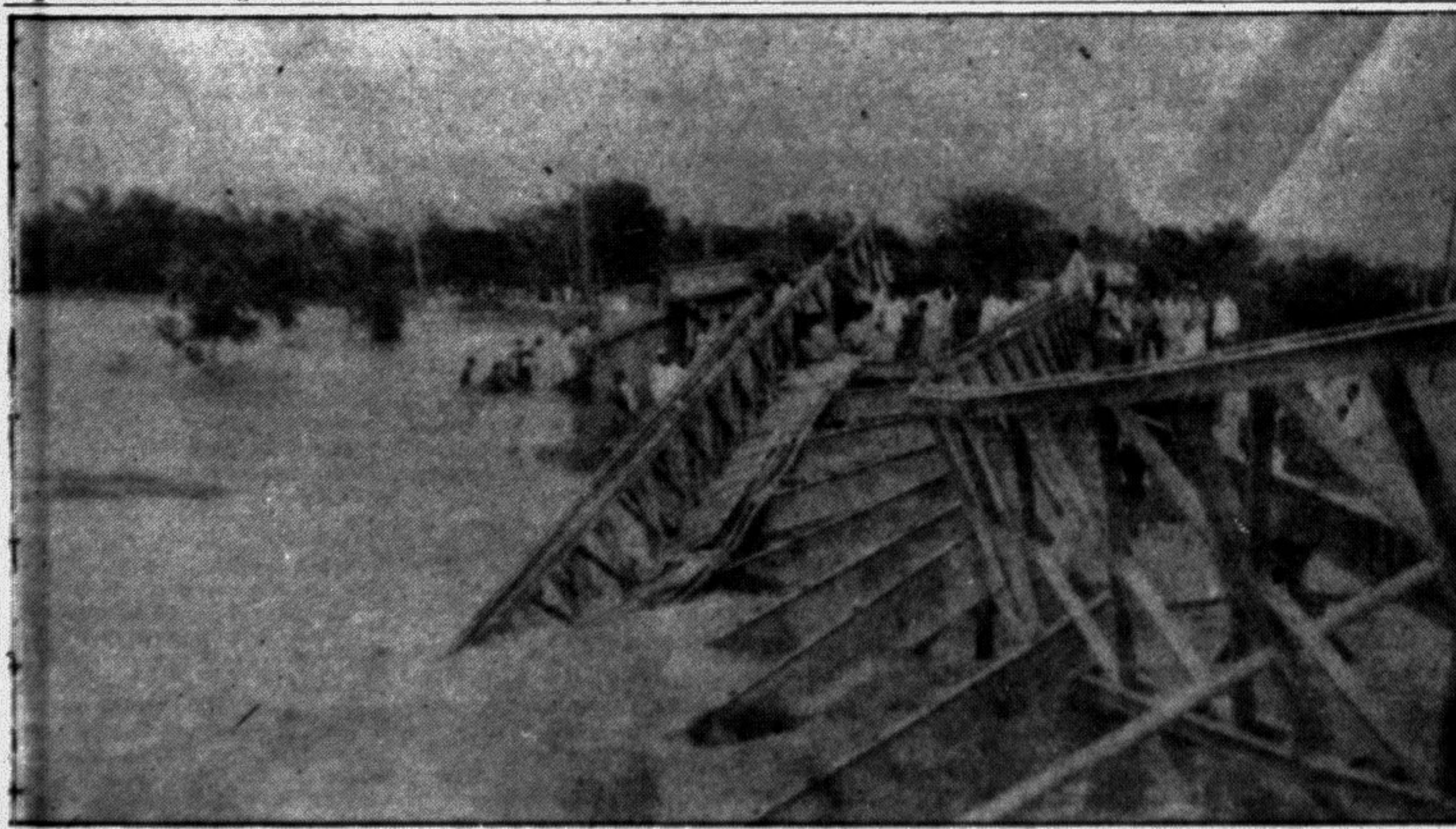
Moreover, the width of the Monu River at the down stream, is getting narrower due to presence of two parallel embankments.

Experts expressing views on the subject said that siltation of the river in at down stream is being caused rapidly due to technical defects of sluice gate constructed on the river at Matarakapon area. So following implementation of the project, the Monu River obviously cannot accommodate the excess water and thus it becomes a serious threat to Moulvibazar town and different villages.

An elderly people of the town said, there was no problem of flood even 20 years ago, when the Monu river occasionally would flow above danger mark. Even then excess water of the river drain out to the haor through canals. He said, present flood problem is a man made one and the Monu project is its main cause.

Before implementation of the Monu Project, the Kawadighi Haor produced huge quantities of fish that could successfully meet the local demands. But after completion of the project, the haor neither is producing paddy nor fish, moreover, the project is causing severe flood, and making people's lives simply miserable.

According to Union Parishad Chairman Shahin Mahmud, 200 kutchas houses and a vast tract of cultivated land were destroyed by the river. Incessant rain over the last few days intensified the erosion, he added.



MOULVIBAZAR: The Langurpol Bridge on Moulvibazar Kulaura road was severely damaged by the on rush of flood water on Monu river. — Star photo

Saifur visits flood affected areas
Permanent repair of
rly tracks directed

HABIGANJ, June 16: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman Tuesday visited the flood affected areas of the district and saw for himself the affected portions of the railway track in the Dhaka-Sylhet rail- way track in Laskarpur near Shayestaganj, reports BSS.

The Finance Minister directed the concerned authority to permanently repair the damaged railway track there. This portion of the track is frequently damaged during floods causing disruption in the Dhaka-Sylhet railway communication.

He also visited the damaged Korangi Bridge on the river Korangi in Bahubal Thana un-

der Habiganj. The Minister went to see for himself the construction work of the Khowai Bridge ear Chunarughat Thana.

Later, in a meeting of the government officials and people's representatives the minister directed the Health Department and the Public Health Engineering Authority to ensure steady supply of pure drinking water to the affected people.

The Finance Minister also visited the worst affected Eskadona and Nazirabad unions under Maulvibazar Thana on Monday.

Navigation in river
Pashur decreases

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, June 16: Navigation in river Pashur connecting Mongla Port is on steady decrease following the absence of dredging facility.

Non-availability of dredger with Mongla Port Authority becomes a key-factor for navigation to deteriorate.

According to reports received here, shows that many captains of foreign ships have mean while expressed their reluctance to touch the port apprehending the ship movement quite hazardous running it aground.

It is alleged that government is half-hearted to initiate massive programme for total development of the port and earmark fund for implementation since opening despite myriads of major problems.

Incidentally Mongla Port is the second sea-port in the country. Arrangement for regular dredging is its key-problem now to keep river channel navigable in full force. What is needed immediately for the Port Authority is to get over the bad signal is a dredger. Indecision and negligence of the authority has delayed the purchase causing mounting loss to nation.

According to another source, dredging of river continues but irregularly and at intervals. During fiscal 1990-91, a project for through dredging was taken up by the port at a cost of Taka Twenty five crores and the contract was signed with China Harbour in China.

But the progress was slow one to adverse situation. Work done, has yielded no fruitful result to ensure navigation permanently.

The problem still persists with same apprehension as before. Navigation in this river is progressively falling down. As such any ship touching the port takes shelter out of anchorage to avoid risk.

It is high time for the Port Authority not to lose a moment

to go in for dredge and keep it engaged round the clock to dispel all doubts.

Corruption in
immigration office

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, June 16: Benapole Port Immigration Office is haunted by corrupt and illegal practices causing a lot of harassment to passport holders on their trip to India for quite some time past, according to a source.

It is learnt that no passport is received in office for entry and giving order for Exit unless bribes are given there-with on account of miscellaneous costs. It various from Taka one hundred to five hundred per passport. It is followed very rigidly and openly within four walls of the office.

It is also learnt that any passport holder violating this practice is detained there for hours together without any reason. This, sometimes creates problem for those intending to go a long distance. Reports indicate that even serious patients going to India for medical treatment are not spared.

It is alleged that normally passports are returned promptly with Exit seal without examining genuineness of Travel Tax payment or verifying whether the passport is fake or duplicate if all local formalities are carefully completed.

Incidentally, daily movement of passport holders through this route is about three hundred on average, a source said.

A group of journalists visited the place recently to observe the situation prevailing there. Many a passport holders complained to them that dealings of this office personnel was objectionable. Bribes and pay-offs were an accepted way to get things done in the office they complained.

Poultry disease breaks
out in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, June 16: Six cows were looted by a gang of miscreants from a 'bathan' at Barahaor in Austagram thana of the district recently.

According to report, the miscreants equipped with fire-arms came by an engine-boat and tied up all the inmates of the bathan.

Later they fled away with six cows. A case was registered with Austagram police station in this connection. But none is yet arrested.

Poultry disease broke out in Kishoreganj, Mymensingh and Netrakona districts with the smuggling of Indian poultry birds.

Poultry birds and eggs are coming to the country and sold in rural and urban areas of these districts.

According to an unofficial source, over 50,000 poultry birds died of ranikhet, pox and gamboro. Besides 80,000 poultry birds have been attacked with disease. These affected poultry birds are also brought to the markets for sale.

The unscrupulous poultry bird traders purchase the affected hens and cocks at a cheap rate and sell them to customers at high rate.

Poultry bird sells at Tk 80 to 90 per kg. The poultry disease could not be checked for want of medicine and vaccines, local people alleged.

Ansar, VDP rally held

A rally of Ansar and VDP of Tarail thana was held at the local public hall recently. Haidarul Islam presided over the rally and it was attended by Abdul Quddus, District Adjutant of Ansar and VDP as chief guest.

Later, prizes were distributed among the members of Ansars

and VDP for their laudable performances.

Ball petition
rejected

The ball petitions of 26 persons including Habibur Rahman, chairman of Galalpur union parishad, all the accused in a dacoity case, were rejected by the thana magistrate of Katiadi recently. All the accused persons appeared before the thana magistrate court and sought bail.

The thana magistrate rejected their bail prayers and ordered to send all of them to the jail hajat.

It deserves mention here that a gang of armed miscreants stormed the house of Awal Miah, owner of Awal Bid Factory of Katiadi Bazar, only 250 yards away from the Katiadi police station recently.

They looted gold ornaments, cash and other valuables worth about Taka 15 lakh.

Diarrhoea
claims 5 lives

Diarrhoea has broken out in different villages of Katiadi thana during the last few days. So far, five persons died of diarrhoea.

The deceased are Baga Bepary (55), Ayesha Khatun (27), Mina (2 months), Haricharan Saha (26) and Mill Akter (50). Over 100 persons had been attacked with the disease in the areas.

The worst affected areas are Dhuldia-Sahasram and Chandpur unions. No measure has yet been taken by the concerned authorities to combat the diseases, it is alleged.

Meanwhile, taking advantage of the situation some dishonest drug traders are selling the essential drug at an exorbitant rate, local people said.