

## District roundup

### SATKHIRA

#### Storm injures six people

June 20: At least six people were injured when a violent storm hit the town on Wednesday last, local people said, reports UNB.

A large number of tinshed houses were blown away and kutcha houses damaged in the storm.

According to witnesses, Mir Mokshed Ali Kindergarten, tinshed hospital and the local bus terminal were damaged in the storm which also uprooted a large number of trees and electric poles.

### JHENIDAH

#### Eight injured in clash

June 20: At least eight people were injured, two seriously, in a clash between two rival groups of villagers at Natopara in Kaliganj thana on Monday, reports UNB.

Both the groups allegedly used bamboo sticks, ramdao and other lethal weapons in the clash which was a sequel to a past enmity.

Seriously injured Afiza Khatun (40) was admitted to Kaliganj Thana Health Complex while Ainal (28) to Sadar Hospital.

A case was filed with Kaliganj Police.

### PABNA

#### Erosion leaves 260 families homeless

June 20: Some 260 families of 16 villages in two thanas of the district were rendered homeless due to erosion by the river Jamuna recently, reports UNB.

Official sources here said standing crops on about 400 acres of land in the two thanas — Bera and Shujanagar — were washed away by the flood water during the period.

They said Bera Pump Station, built at a cost of Tk 4 crore and Nagar Bari Ferry Ghat were also threatened by the river.

They said the erosion and the flood situation in the district worsened further following incessant rainfall during the last few days.

### FENI

#### One beheaded

June 20: A man was beheaded by a house wife while allegedly trying to violate her at a village in Sonagazi thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said Abdur Rouf (45) forced his way into the house of Rahima Khatun at Mandari village at night for allegedly violating her.

At one stage, she attacked Abdur Rouf with a sharp weapon and beheaded him.

Rahima's husband was working in the Middle-East. Taking the advantage, Abdur Rouf offered her for having illicit affairs many times, it was learnt.

A case was registered with local police in this connection.

### BARISAL

#### 2.5 thousand acres of land brought under afforestation

From Staff Correspondent

June 20: Forest Department has already taken up a programme for bringing about 2.5 thousand acres of land under afforestation programme in Patuakhali coastal areas.

Quoting official sources our Patuakhali Correspondent stated that more than one thousand acres of coastal belt of the district will be brought under 'keora' planting and about nine hundred acres of land under various fruit bearing and timber trees to make the adopted programme successful.

Forest Department will provide about two lac saplings of various trees among the people of this district.

### MOULVIBAZAR

#### Diarrhoea claims four lives

June 20: Diarrhoea claimed four lives at Sagarnal union in Kulaura thana of the district during the last week, reports UNB.

The victims were identified as Rakitunnesa (40), Samsu Miah (55), Shamsunnesa (35) and Sonia Tati (5).

Unofficial sources said over 1,000 people were also attacked by the water-borne disease during the period.

### JAMALPUR

#### Workshop on drama ends

June 20: A 15-day long workshop on modern drama was held at the local Singinai Girls High School premises recently, reports UNB.

A total of 29 actors and artists from various cultural organisations of the district took part in the workshop.

The closing ceremony of the workshop, organised by Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, was addressed among others by Rezaul Karim Hira and Alok Kumar Roy.

### SIRAJGANJ

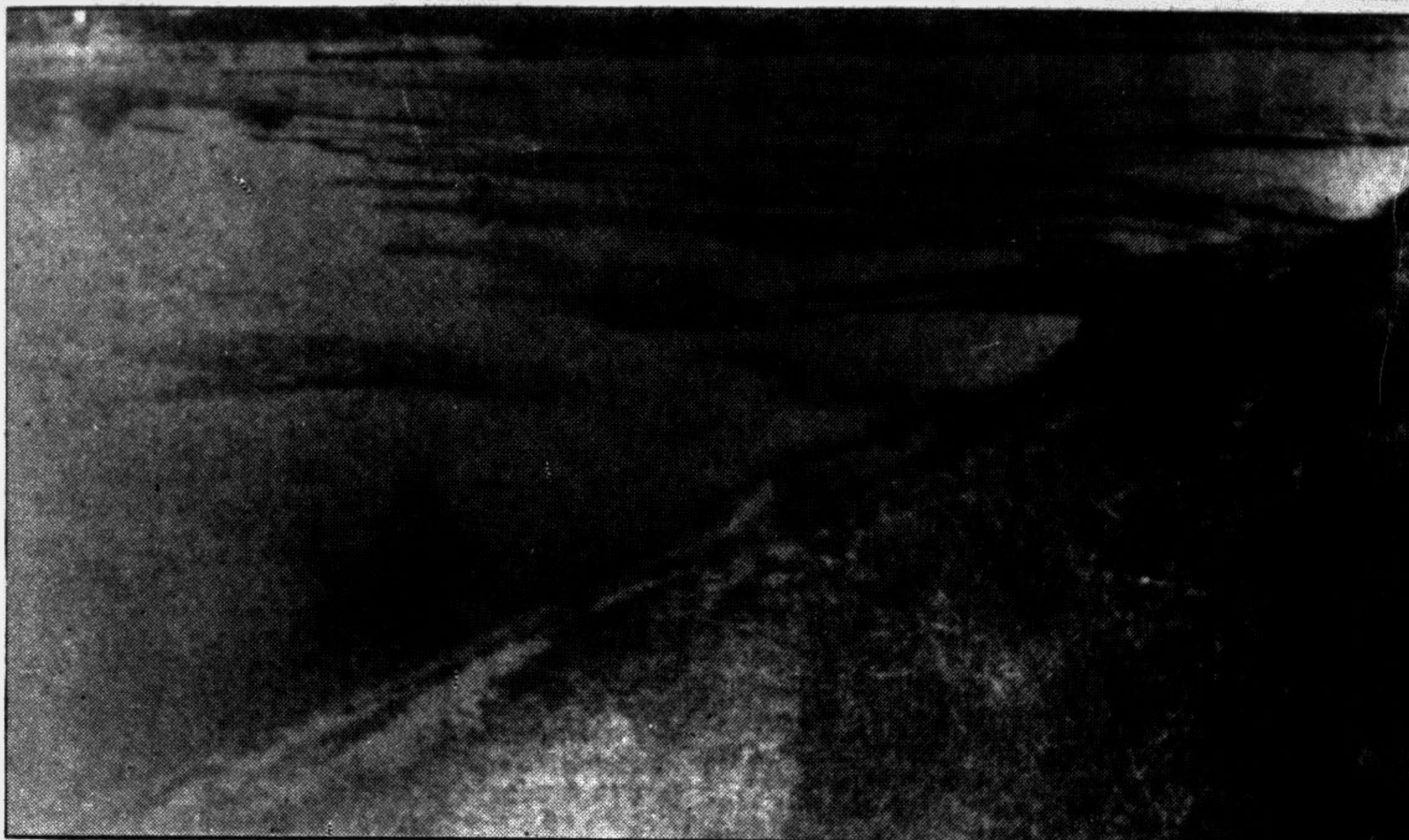
#### Two killed in separate incidents

June 20: Two people were killed in separate incidents in two thanas of the district recently, reports UNB.

Family sources said one Monjel (35) of Ilishamari village in Royganj thana died of snakebite.

Abdul Hakim (25) son of Delwar Hossain drowned when he was taking his bath in the river Korotoa at Bhandraghat village in Kamarkhand thana.

Another report adds: Four people, including a train guard, were injured when some youths hurled stones at the Sirajganj bound Padma inter-city train near Sholop Railway station.



JAMALPUR: Shoals appearing at one point of the river Brahmaputra.

—Star photo

## Once mighty Brahmaputra turning into a canal due to siltation

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, June 20: Brahmaputra now turning into a canal for rapid siltation. It has lost its current from its source of the eastern Himalayas down to its mouth.

The river is 1830 miles long streaming through Dibrugarh, Gauhati and Meghalaya and pours into Bangladesh from the western side at the Garo hills.

From Dwanganj, Nalitabari, Jamalpur down to Bhatrabar where the river meets Meghana it has created thousands of shoals and sand banks on its stream. On the eastern outfall numerous depression has sprung up. Very small amount of water is trickling down the Brahmaputra. Once quarter mile wide river is now shrinking into a five to six metre wide water drain.

On the soggy shoals farmers grow paddy, wheat, ground nut and pulses. Somewhere there is bean and pumpkin machans. Breaking knee-deep water people cross Brahmaputra. There is brisk activities of digging sand and dumping that on the bank for sale. Cultivators plant transplanted

boro over the sand banks. Frogs and tadpoles croak in the evening and at night jackals howl and break the silence of the hour.

One M A Jilil, a day labourer of Nandina bazar area, under Jamalpur thana said, he along with other colleagues come down to Brahmaputra to dig sand which provides him means of living. He earns Taka 55 a day. He said, all along Dwanganj, Nalitabari, Sherpur, Jamalpur, Nandina Begunbari, Nurundi, Riazpur, Biddaganj, and Mymensingh Brahmaputra is drying up and leaving charrs. Lifting his hands from the ankledeep water at Shambaganj Bridge side Abdul Karim, a local farmer said, we do not blame anyone for our misfortune of not having water in Brahmaputra.

In replying to a question why Brahmaputra is running dry, an engineer of Water Development Board, Mymensingh said, the seventeenth century earthquake has caused this river to adopt a major change. Centuries back the river was flowing through Bahadurabadhat in the name

of Jamuna—Brahmaputra. There were torrential stream. But due to severe heat of the earthquake its course had been diverted and ran through Mymensingh-Shambaganj its eastern outfall. Numerous haors, baors, oxbow lakes depressions have been formed due to this quake. Besides due to several barrages in its upstream the natural flow of its water has been interrupted. There is tremendous siltation. Dredging is very expensive. The cost per cubic feet is more than Taka two crore.

And dredging at this circumstances can not bring any welfare. Agriculture has been seriously affected. Underground water level is declining. Navigation has been ceased. Within a couple of years it may dry up absolutely. In answer to a question whether the river would dry up in future the Executive Engineer of WDB of Tangail zone said 'no, since water talks with India is on progress we are hopeful about retrieving the flow at the river. During Pakistan period there were water treaties with

India including Brahmaputra Multi-Purpose Barrage Projects. The treaty included (1) irrigation (2) control and (3) hydroelectricity of this country.

Many programmes were initiated in the post liberation period. Many meetings of technical committees of both the countries had been arranged. Efforts were made to revive the old contact. But no effective measures were taken in case of Brahmaputra. In 1977 a bilateral water development treaty was signed with India. It was decided that Bangladesh would get 34500 cuses of water during its lean period.

After 1988 the treaty agreements disappeared. We had our initiatives, but they showed no interest. However, 18000 cuses of water was flowing.

Last January there was a water treaty with India. The technical committee members at both the countries had talks on this issue. Efforts are being made to restore old treaty and make it permanent.

## Notes from Moulvibazar

MOULVIBAZAR, June 20: The price of salt has shown an upward trend in different markets of the district and its adjoining areas causing anxieties to the consumers, reports UNB.

According to local market sources, salt is now being sold at Taka 12 per kilogram as against Taka 8 a few days back.

Consumers held some dishonest traders for the increase adding they were creating artificial scarcity of salt by controlling the wholesale market.

They urged the authorities to ensure smooth supply of salt in the market and take necessary measures against the unscrupulous traders.

### Flood situation improves

Another report of UNB says: The over-all flood situation in the district improved further with the recession of water, officials said here.

Some 21 unions in six thanas of the district were affected by the flood.

Standing crops on about 27,795 acres of land were washed away and 86 educational institutions damaged by the flood waters.

The district administration distributed relief materials, including rice, wheat, sarcel, lungi, biscuits and cash among the affected people.

### 34 miscreants arrested

Police arrested 34 alleged miscreants from different parts of Kulaura thana of the district during the last few days.

Acting on tips, police raided some areas of the thana and nabbed the trouble-mongers, police said here today (Friday).

The arrested were said to be involved in various crimes, including tolls collection, arson, and murder, police added.

### Lack of proper drainage system

A UNB report says: Blockade of drainage system in municipal area has been causing much inconvenience to the city dwellers.

Most of the drains passing through the town are un-maintained and remained filled with stinking garbage polluting the environment.

## 24 school buildings to be constructed in Gaibandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, June 20: Facilities Department under Ministry of Education has undertaken a development programme for the construction of 24 school buildings in the district. The department will spend Taka one crore for the implementation of the work.

Under this programme, three classrooms of four boys' and two girls' high schools under Moulvibari, Fulchhari, Saouanapur, Shaghata and Gobindaganj thanas will be constructed. Besides an additional building will be renovated in each of these schools. A total of 48 lakh taka will be spent for the purpose.

The department also allotted another fund of Tk 45 lakh from its revenue head for the construction of four rooms of a number of primary schools under Sunderganj, Sadullapur, Gobindaganj and Gaibandha sadar thanas. Besides, 14 primary schools will be renovated in the said thanas under this programme.

The work is going on in full swing and expected to be completed by next month.

### Gang leader arrested

Gaibandha police arrested

## Overloading of buses a regular feature

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, June 20: Overloading of the buses and minibuses plying on Nagarbari Ghat-Bogra and Bogra-Rangpur-Dinajpur roads is a regular feature. Due to the overloading, accidents occur frequently.

Bus passengers of 16 northern districts of Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Natore, Sirajganj, Pabna, Joipurhat, Bogra, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Panchagarh, Thakurgaon and Dinajpur have been facing untold sufferings for lack of amenities for a long-time.

The miserable condition of the roads due to the negligence of the concerned authority, whims of the owners of the vehicles, misbehaviour

of the helpers, conductors and drivers, overloading and stands without waiting sheds and toilets are the main cause of the suffering of the passengers.

It is alleged that conductors of most of the buses and minibuses realise fair at higher rates from passengers.

According to a report, there are over 80 bus stands in these 16 northern districts. But there are no waiting sheds and latrines in these bus stands. As a result, the passengers suffer much.

Over ten lakh people travel by buses and minibuses from these 16 districts everyday. The passengers including children and women suffer much at the bus stands for want of waiting sheds. They suffer when it rains. They also

suffer in the scorching heat of sun. Female passengers face immense difficulties due to the lack of latrines and urinals.

The 28-kilometers long Natore-Bogra road and 108-kilometer long Bogra-Rangpur-Dinajpur road in dilapidated conditions. Innumerable cracks and potholes have developed on them. At present, these two roads have become unfit for the plying of vehicles. Vehicles are plying on the roads with a great risk.

Birampur-Palashbari road has not been completely metalled. On the other hand the road was badly damaged by the worst flood last year. The buses, minibuses and trucks are facing a serious problem while plying on the road. Fatal road accidents may take place at any time.

While, started distribution of saplings among the members of public at a very marginal price to see that the afforestation programme succeeds.

A large scale afforestation programme has been undertaken by the District Forest Department during this current season.

Under this programme the department produced three lakh 80 thousand saplings of different trees in seven nurseries in the district.

Besides, 30 thousand saplings were produced in each thana nurseries and over two lakh saplings of wood and fruit bearing trees were produced in district nurseries under Forest Department.

The department meanwhile, started distribution of saplings among the members of public at a very marginal price to see that the afforestation programme succeeds.

## 30,000 children of Sirajganj suffer from malnutrition

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, June 20: More than 30,000 children of nine thanas in Sirajganj district suffer from malnutrition and water-borne diseases.

It is learnt that a large number of children and juveniles have been suffering from malnutrition and various diseases like, dysentery, blood dysentery, jaundice, hooping cough, polionomyelitis, skin diseases.

Thana-wise break up shows that 4300 children have been suffering from malnutrition and diseases in Sadar, 300 children in Kazipur, 3400 in Tarash, 2700 in Ullapara, 3600 in Shahzadpur, 4300 in Chowhali, 2400 in Belkuchi, 2800 children in Kamasakhandia and 3200 children in Rajganj thanas.

Most of the children are orphans and cannot afford treatment for financial crisis. The affected children needs early arrangement of treatment and protection from the water-borne disease.

### 12,000 tubewells inoperative

More than 12,000 hand tubewells of 74 thanas in 10 northern districts remain inoperative since long past causing acute crisis of pure drinking water in the areas resulting various water-borne diseases like dysentery, jaundice, miasmas and chicken pox.

It is learnt from source of Public Health Engineers Department (PHED) that a total of 1,35,221 tubewells were installed in the districts of Bogra, Jaipurhat, Rangpur,

Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Pabna, Sirajganj, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh.

At present 1,22,626 tubewells are operative. The inoperative tubewells are of damaged pipes and filters and without heads. In absence of maintenance the said tubewells could not be used.

Besides one tubewell in each government primary school was installed by UNICEF in the aforesaid district which have no existence now.

Due to shortage of tubewells, about 49 per cent people are dependent upon pond and river water. Following the crisis of pure water, some diseases have broken out in the rural areas of 10 northern districts. The water-borne diseases include dysentery, jaundice, 'ham' and chicken pox.

In 1992-93 fiscal year, a scheme was taken to re-install 610 tubewells and repairing of 2,938 tubewells. But the concerned authority have instructed to reduce 30 per cent of work. Besides, scheme of installing 41 tubewells in each districts is not implemented as yet.

Official sources said that in 1991 every hand tubewell cost Tk 350 but during the current fiscal year, price of each tubewell have been fixed at Tk 700 which is beyond the purchasing capacity of the poor rural people.

Knowledgeable sources have opined to install new tubewells and to repair the inoperative ones and to reduce the price of tubewells for ensuring supply of pure drinking water.

## Train service on Santahar Gaibandha-Lalmonirhat route irregular

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, June 20: The train service on Santahar-Gaibandha-Lalmonirhat route of Bangladesh Railway is almost irregular causing a lot of difficulties to the passengers.

Moreover, number of trains in this route has been reduced in such a way that only four up and down trains run during the day which cannot cope with the increasing member of passengers.

The trains running on this route do not maintain any timetable. As a result, the passengers particularly those who have to attend courts, offices and institutions are experiencing immense sufferings.

It is alleged that the authority concerned did not take any measures for maintaining the timetable of trains despite repeated representations by the member of the public. Locomotive power shortage is the main problem in smooth running of trains.

Very often old engines go out of order on the way caused detaining train for several hours. The trains on the route runs at the speed of 10 to 15 miles per hour which takes maximum time to reach the destination.

Shortage of passenger coach is a long standing problem in this route. Authority did not pay heed to the requirement of passengers. Trains move very slowly and remain overcrowded all the time due to inadequate number of compartments. The seating arrangement in the trains are deplorable and not up to the standard of use. The toilets are seen dirty all the time even it become hard to stay inside the compartment for bed smell due to lack of regular cleaning.

Allegations have that some corrupt railway employees are

allowing ticketless passengers by trains taking gratifications.

Husband filed a dowry case against wife, father and mother-in-laws Sadullapur Thana Magistrate court for demanding dowry.

The plaintiff Shamsul Hoq of village Faridpur under Sadullapur thana alleged that his wife Morsheda Begum, her mother-in-law Moslamuddin and mother-in-law Latif Begum demanded Taka ten thousand or 15 decimal landed property at the name of Morsheda as dowry otherwise parents of Morsheda will not send their daughter to the house of Shamsul.

### Robbery attempt foiled

A highway robbery bid was foiled at Katiyaganj on Gobindaganj-Dinajpur highway, recently. According to report a gang of highway dacoits attacked two night coaches of Jaker Paribahan and Hanif Enterprise creating barricade on the highway with three jobs at Katiyaganj on Gobindaganj-Dinajpur highway.

Many of them newly turned destitute after losing all their belongings including land and home and thronged in thana and district headquarters in search of work and shelters erecting temporary thatched shed around railway station, road side abandoned space or old buildings.

It may be mentioned that recurring natural calamities pushed them to the unfortunate situation and consequently, thousands of people were compelled to leave houses with their families in search of provision.

As the years are passing by the number of these destitute people has been increasing.

## Proposal of Changing Name of Ship

I, Flt. Lt. S.A. Sultan (Retd.) Managing Director of M/S. Unichart Navigation Ltd. 70/1, Inner Circular Road, National Scout Bhaban (5th Fl.) Kakrail, Dhaka acquired

M. T. EBISU MARU

From M/S. Kaiyo Corporation, Japan by purchase going to apply to the Principal Officer, Marcentile Marine Department and the Registrar of Bangladesh ships for Registering the same vessel to the port of Chittagong under Bangladesh Flag in the name of M. T. SHANKACHIL-2

Any one having any objection to the above proposal may raise the same to the Registrar (P.O.M.M.D) Chittagong, within 7 (Seven) days from the Publication of the notice.



COMILLA: These women are busy making different sizes of baskets for marketing. —Star photo