

## Processing of raw skins pose threat to health

**KISHOREGANJ, June 1:** The processing of raw skins of animals in the residential areas of Bhairab Pourashava has been causing health hazards and suffering of the people, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, raw skins are salted in open space adjacent to the residential areas polluting the environment. It is almost impossible to reside in the houses due to bad smell of the skins.

## 312 development projects undertaken

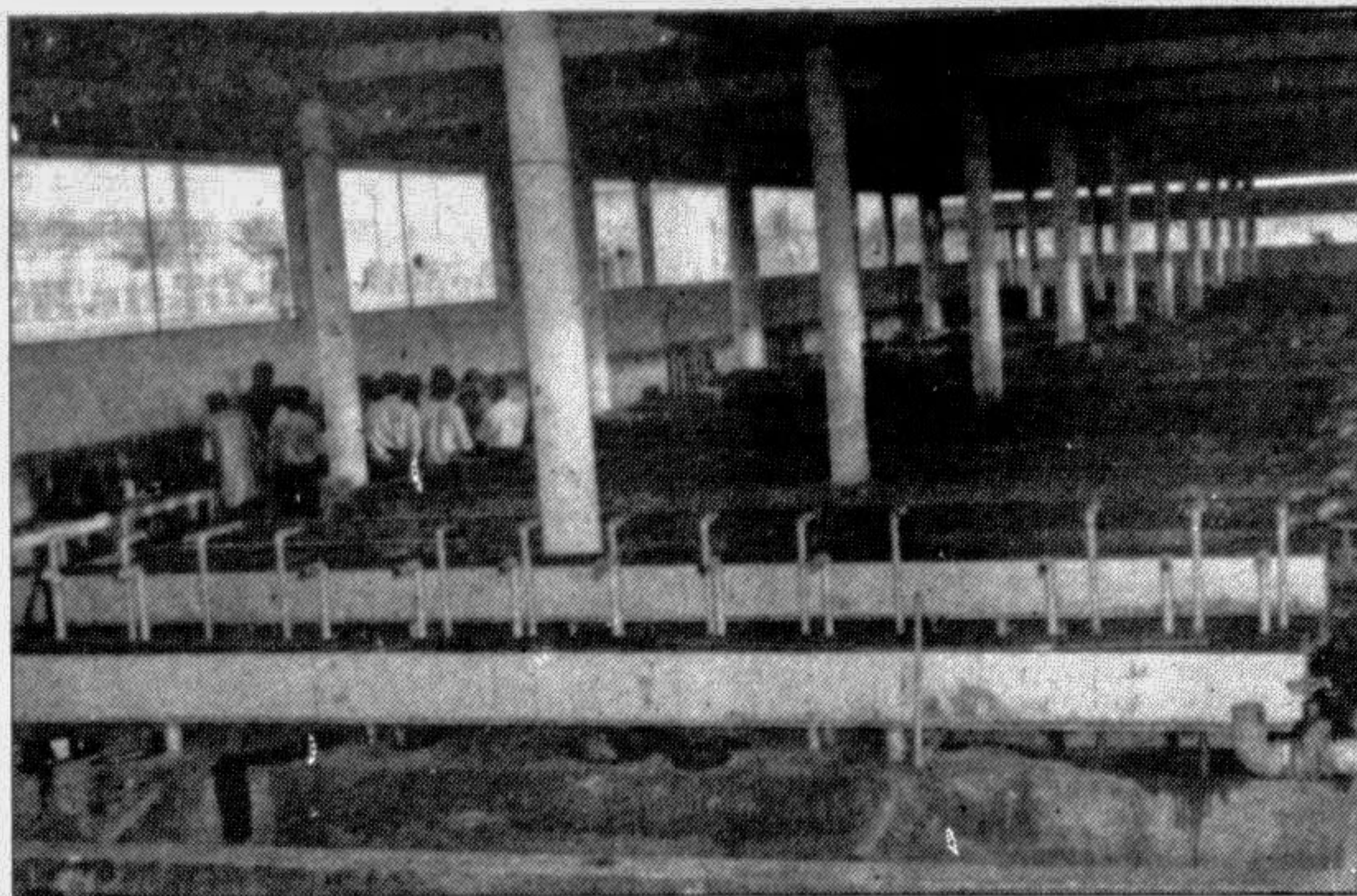
**MYMENSINGH, June 1:** A total of 312 projects under Food for Works Programme have been taken up in 12 thanas of the Mymensingh district during the current dry season, reports BSS.

The ministry of disaster management has allotted 5783 metric tons of wheat worth Taka 3,75,89,500 for the implementation of these projects.

The situation turns worst every year after Eid-ul-Azha when the unscrupulous skin dealers become active in collecting raw skins from different areas and preserve here and there in the town.

Local people alleged that the dealers process the skins for months together with least consideration to public annoyance and suffering.

The people of the thickly populated river port town have urged the authorities to take immediate steps against the unscrupulous skin dealers for the sake of public health and sanitation.



**MYMENSINGH:** The hatchery of the Fish Research Institute. This hatchery is one of the most modern equipped with all necessary apparatus. Fish from this hatchery are taken to open pond for further growth and experiment.

## Mighty Brahmaputra now a mere canal

From Our Correspondent

**JAMALPUR, June 1:** The Brahmaputra river is now turning into a canal for rapid siltation. It lost its current from its source of the eastern Himalayas down to its mouth.

The river is 1,830 miles long streaming through Dibrugarh, Gauhati and Meghalaya and pours into Bangladesh from the western side at the Garo hills.

From Dewanganj, Nalitabari, Jamalpur town to Bhairab Bazar where the river meets Meghna it has created thousands of shoals and sand banks on its stream.

On the soggy shoals farmers grow paddy, wheat, ground nut and pulses, beans and pumpkins.

People cross the Brahmaputra by walking these days. A brisk business is being carried out digging sand and dumping that on the bank for sale. Cultivators plant transplanted boro on the sand banks. Frogs croak in the evening and at night jackals howl and break the silence of the hour.

M A Jalil, a day labourer of Nandina Bazar area, under Jamalpur thana said he

along with other colleagues came down to Brahmaputra everyday to dig sand which provides him means of living. He earns Taka 55 a day, he said. All along Dewanganj, Nalitabari, Sherpur, Jamalpur, Nandina, Begunbari, Nurundi, Riazpur, Biddaganj, and Mymensingh Brahmaputra is drying up and leaving chasms.

Lifting his hands from the ankle deep water at Shambhuganj Bridge side Abdul Kalam, a local farmer said, we do not blame any one for our misfortune of not having water in Brahmaputra.

In reply to a question why Brahmaputra is running dry, an engineer of Water Development Board (WDB) Mymensingh said, the seventeenth century earthquake has caused this river to adopt a major change.

Centuries ago the river was flowing through Bahadurabadhat as Samuna-Brahmaputra. There were torrential stream. But due to severe heat of the earthquake its course has been diverted and ran through Mymensingh-Shambhuganj.

Numerous haors, baors, oxbow lakes, depressions have been formed due to these earthquake. Besides due to creation of several barrages in its upper streams the natural water flow has been interrupted. There is tremendous siltation all along the length of the river. Dredging is very expensive, he says. Dredging at this stage cannot bring any oilfare. Agriculture has been seriously affected. Underground water level is declining. Navigation has been ceased. Within a couple of years the river may not exist any more.

In answer to a question whether the river would totally dry up in future, the Executive Engineer of WDB of Tangail zone said, 'this is not true. Water talks with India is on progress. We are hopeful about retrieving the flow of the river.'

During the Pakistan period there were water treaties with India including Brahmaputra Multi-Purpose Barrage Projects. The treaty included (a) irrigation (b) water control, (c) hydro-electricity of this country. Many programmes were initiated during the post-liberation period. Many meetings among 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 said in the agreement that Bangladesh would get 34,500 cusecs of water during its lean period.

## Frequent traffic jam causes much inconvenience

From Our Correspondent

Frequent traffic jam in different parts of the district town has become a common feature causing much inconvenience to the pedestrians and vehicular movement for quite a long time.

Plying of large number of rickshaws, unplanned parking of vehicles in busy areas and unauthorised occupation of footpaths by small traders create frequent traffic jam in the town.

Local people alleged that only a limited number of rickshaws plying on the road have valid licences while more than 2,000 rickshaws ply on the road without licence.

The situation aggravates when rickshaws coming from adjacent areas of the own ply on the roads as per their whims. They have no knowledge of traffic rules.

## District roundup

### BAGURA

#### 16 killed in separate incidents

**June 1:** At least 16 people were killed in different incidents in Magura district during the last one month, police said, says UNB.

According to police and hospital sources, six people were killed in road mishaps, four in tornado, three by armed miscreants, two by lightning and one was beaten to death.

Zumarat Shaikh (38) of village Zia Nanduali was killed by lightning on May 25. Abdus Samad was killed in a road mishap on Magura-Jhenaidah road on May 23. Masud Ali Shaikh (26) was killed on same road on May 21. Ganadra Nath (35), Nani Gopal (40), Akram Ali (30) and Rabiul Islam (32) were killed by tornado at Arpara Bazar on May 18. Ayub Ali Mia (60) was beaten to death by some miscreants at village Banga-Berol on May 15. Shamsul Azam Sazzad (45), chairman of Srekal Union Parishad was killed by armed miscreants on May 9.

Khagendra Nath Biswas (35) was killed in a road accident on Magura-Kamarkhali road near Kalinagar on May 9. Razab Ali (30) was killed in a road accident near Parnenduali on the same day. Gulzar Ali (16), SSC examinee was killed by lightning at village Vhaina on May 14. Gurupada (45) and Gozendra (40) were brutally killed by armed miscreants in Rupdaha bill on April 25. Sazzad (4) a minor boy was killed in a road accident on Magura-Kumarkhali road near Belanagar on April 25. Fazlur Rahman (35) was killed in a road accident on Magura-Jessore road near Arpara on the same day.

Separate cases were filed with different police stations.

### BARISAL

#### Tk 2.24 lakh earned by sale of phone cards

**June 1:** Telephone and Telegraph Board, Barisal, earned a sum of Taka 3,24,600 by selling telephone-cards of different denominations in Barisal district during one year till April 3, says BSS.

According to an official source, two card phones, one each at main post office and Sher-e-Bangla Medical College premises of Barisal, were introduced in April last year.

The post office source said the card-phone was the best and easy mechanism for earning revenue for the government.

There are nine card-phones in service in six southern districts of Barisal Division, the source added.

Altogether 1,700 cards of Taka 50 denominations, 1,614 cards of Taka 100 denominations and 391 cards of Taka 200 denominations were sold from different post offices of Barisal district during this period, the source said.

### BBARIA

#### Huge quantity of smuggled goods seized

**June 1:** The BDR Jawans of 32 battalion of Kalikachha under Saral thana in a special operations 'damka hawa' and 'aguner fulki' — at various points of Brahmanbaria and Habiganj districts seized smuggled goods worth about Taka 1 lakh 6 thousand 5 hundred during the last two months.

Sources said, on the eve of Eid day a group of poor women going door to door of urban and bordering areas of the districts were found selling Indian sarees, meanwhile, the BDR jawans seized huge quantities of Indian sarees worth about taka 1 lakh 700 under the operation 'damka hawa'.

Besides they also seized Indian salt and a rickshaw worth about Taka 5 thousand 860 under an anti-smuggling operation 'aguner fulki'.

### SATKHIRA

#### One killed by thunderbolt

**From Our Correspondent**

**June 1:** One person of village Puspakati under Debhata thana of Satkhira district was killed by thunder bolt recently. It is reported that the victim, Ruhul Amin, 20, used to maintain his family by selling stationery goods from door to door in the villages of the thana. On the faithful day when he reached near Hrir Chak of the same thana a thunder bolt struck him instantly killing the victim on the spot.

### MADARIPUR

#### One held with 210 bottles of phensidyl syrup

From Our Correspondent

**June 1:** The District Anti-Smuggling Task Force members has arrested a smuggler and recovered 210 Indian phensidyl syrup bottles worth Taka 20,000 seized from a night coach at Tekerhat bus stand in Rajoir thana early Tuesday.

Acting on a tip, the district Anti-smuggling Task Force led by Md Ibrahim Khalil, First Class Magistrate, challenged the Barisal bound night (Dhaka metro cha 7968) of 'Madhuchhanda Paribahan' coming from Benapole and recovered the contraband.

Sensing the arrival of the task force members the alleged smuggler, identified as, Sumon 25 of Rakudia village in Babuganj thana of Barisal district, tried to escape. But the police on duty managed to nab him who also recovered some other valuable papers from his possession.

A case was filed with the police.

### SIRAJGANJ

#### One injured in clash

**June 1:** One person was seriously injured in a clash between two groups of people in the town Tuesday over teasing of a school girl, reports UNB.

Police said, one Momin and his associates teased Shilpi 16, a student of class ten, on Monday and later attacked her uncle Aminul Islam who protested the teasing.

The clash erupted when Aminul and his relatives retaliated against the teases Tuesday morning.

Shilpi's brother Johnny 20 received head injury in the clash. He was admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital in a serious condition.

Local people complained that eve teasing had increased in the town in recent times.

In another incident, a youngman was injured in a clash with his uncle over land dispute at Doldip village of Sirajganj thana this morning.

Jinnah (17) was admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital with head injury.

Two cases were lodged with the local police in connection with the clashes.

### NARAIL

#### Betel leaf growers in serious problem

**June 1:** Betel leaf cultivation in three thanas of the district is being hampered due to shortage of adequate bank loan and lack of marketing facilities, reports UNB.

Ramnagarchar, Aouria, Kulsur, Baropara, Ratadanga, Kamalpur, Lakhimpasha areas of the district are famous for cultivation of betel leaf.

But due to price hike of raw materials and other necessary inputs, at least 10,000 cultivators have been forced to leave the profession.

Some growers said bamboo, oilcake, rope, straw etc are scarce in the district and its prices have gone beyond their purchasing capacity.

A medium size bamboo is selling at Taka 80 as against Taka 40 which is an essential ingredient for 'pan baray'.

They also said, at least an amount of Taka 22,000 is required to cultivate betel leaf on a bigha of land but the yield brings Taka 11,000 due to lack of marketing facilities.

### PATUAKHALI

#### Poultry diseases break out

**June 1:** Poultry diseases have broken out in different thanas of the district causing heavy losses to the pet birds, reports UNB.

Local people said, they are not getting any preventive or curative measures from the concerned department. As a result, the poultry farmers are badly affected. Mentionable that poultry farming is one of the main sources of income of the rural poor of the district.

Due to the spread of the diseases the prices of poultry birds have sharply fallen in the local market while the supply of eggs has also declined.

It is alleged that many poultry birds had died even after they were vaccinated. Villagers said the vaccines were not properly preserved and frequent power failure was also responsible for the effectivity of the same.

They urged the concerned authorities to take immediate measures to protect the poultry population of the district.

## Pregnant housewife, three sons slaughtered to death

From Our Correspondent

**BRAHMANBARIA, June 1:** A five months old pregnant house wife and her three sons were slaughtered to death by a suspected miscreant at the victims' residence in Chaturpur under sadar thana recently.

The victims were identified as Husnara, 28, house wife of Mohammad Ahad Ali and her three sons Suman, 20, Khukan, 6, and Siful.

Eye witnesses said, the neighbours saw the victims as they were being slaughtered on the floor. Later the neighbours informed the police station at Brahmanbaria thana. The police sent the bodies at Brahmanbaria sadar hospital for autopsy.

Meanwhile, Ahad Mia, husband of Husnara was reportedly not in his house on the day of the murder.

An UNB report adds: A man was killed and 50 others were injured in a clash over a petty matter between two rival groups at Darilapang village of Nabinagar thana last week.

According to witnesses, the clash ensued over cow grazing in a paddy field. Villagers divided into two groups, one

supported the owner of the cow and another took the field owner's side in which Ratan Mia 30 died on the spot.

Among the injured, three people were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, eight admitted to Nabinagar Hospital and another 37 released after first aid.

Police arrested four people in this connection.

Another message from Narshingdi adds: Five people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of the town following a previous enmity.

Witnesses said, the clash ensued on May 20 night when a group of people numbering 20-25 of East Dattapara attacked the Bhuiyan Bari group of West Dattapara and looted the valuables.

The attackers opened fire and blasted bombs on Bhuiyan Bari in which one Alamgir received bullet injuries.

Three attackers were caught red handed by the people, identified as Shahjahan, Shamal Saha and Pradip Saha of West Dattapara when they tried to flee.

## Woes of rly passengers in northern region More railway coaches demanded

From Our Correspondent

**GAIBANDHA, June 1:** More Railway coaches have been a long standing demand of the passengers of different northern railway routes, specially Dinajpur-Teestamuk Ghat, Santaher-Lalmohirhat, Rangpur-Kurigram and Parbatipur-Panchagarh sections. The existing passenger coaches are also in deplorable condition.

Since the liberation, Railway routes were occasionally closed down facing acute shortage of engines. Moreover, passenger coaches are being reduced day by day due to disorder and unserviceable condition of the coaches. As a result, at present only a few number of trains run in different sections with negligible number of passenger coaches for which most of the trains remain jam packed most of the time. The old women passengers are often found helpless to board and get down from the trains at different stations.

Sometimes passengers are found crowded inside the open space of luggage vans. Very often passengers are seen travelling on the hook joint between two bogies. Such kind of journey is undoubtedly of suicidal nature.

Compartments of the trains are not worth using. A good number of ceiling fans were stolen by the miscreants from the compartments. At least one third of the hard board and paxen pieces have already disappeared from the wall and ceiling of the compartments.

Influx of floating people

Aluminium fittings like window frame, shutters have been stolen. It was alleged that an organised gang of miscreants have been involved in pilfering railway properties since long.

The railway authority has been urged to mitigate the sufferings of the passenger by increasing number of trains in different sections with adequate passenger coaches.

### Anti-social activities on increase

Gaibandha Railway station has become a den of anti-social activities. Such activities take hold of the Railway platform and adjoining areas after dusk. It has become simply impossible for passengers specially the women to come to Railway station for trains. In the night large number of these anti-social elements come here on afternoon trains and take their position shortly after dusk. They fix up terms with the partners and leave for nearby dark places. The floating girls return at late night and take shelter on the platform for the rest of night.

Gaibandha Railway station, situated in the heart of town has long been occupied by the gaygirls who pollute adjoining areas.

There is none to look into the matter. Local police station is situated close-by but they don't poke their nose in the matter.

Influx of floating people

have been increasing in the district head quarters posing problem to the town dwellers.

Almost everyday floating people are pouring in the town. Generally they come from river side of Teesta and Brahmaputra where erosion remain active round the year. Earlier those people lived along the western banks of rivers but the wide spread erosion engulfed all their belongings.

To earn their bread they are moving to town for survival. The exact figure of the floating people is yet to be ascertained. According to social observers and local NGO workers these people have been polluting the environment as well as the social life. They have been erecting their temporary sheds here and there. They young women belonging to floating families are compelled under desperate condition to sell their chastity to earn their livelihood.

On the other hand, the birth rate among them have increased while the opportunity for employment has decreased. It may be mentioned that the natural calamities pushed them to unfortunate situation and consequently thousands of people were compelled to leave their houses with families in search of provision. There is no programme in the district for the rehabilitation of such floating people.



Ataur Rahman Khan (Second from right, in spectacles) speaking to journalists.—Star photo

## Place demand in JS, Matin tells Opposition

**NARAYANGANJ, June 1:** Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury has called upon the leaders of the opposition political parties to place their demand in parliament and help reactivate the proceedings of the house, reports BSS.

Raising of demand staying outside the parliament which is the highest policy making body in the country is undemocratic and unconstitutional, he added.

## Number of drug addicts on rise in Narail

**NARAIL, June 1:** The number of drug addicts is on rise in the district causing panic among the peace-loving people, reports UNB.

Most of the addicts are rickshawpullers, sweepers, transport workers and students. Mostly they use rectified spirit and phensidyl syrup with impunity as these are available in medical stores and certain footpath shops.

The addicts are also engaged in various anti-social activities including illegal trade, smuggling, theft, hijacking etc. Lack of social awareness, family control and shortage of employment opportunities and frustrations are the main reasons for increasing addiction, doctors and social workers said.

Local elite complained that the addicts use drugs freely as nobody dares to protest them. The law enforcing agencies are found reluctant to take action against them due to reasons best known to them, they added.

The Home Minister was addressing as chief guest a discussion organised by Narayanganj District unit of BNP to mark the 13th death anniversary of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman at Ali Ahmed Chumka auditorium.

Presided over by Rokonuddin Mollah, president of Narayanganj District BNP, the discussion was addressed, among others, by members of parliament Abul Kalam, Prof Rezaul Karim and Ataur Rahman. President of Narayanganj District unit of JASAS Anisul Islam Ghani and office secretary Jannatul Ferdous.

Matin said parliament is the centre for discussions of all national issues. The opposition political parties should sit together with the treasury bench to sort out any problems on the basis of constitution, he pointed out.

The Minister said democracy meant tolerance, cohesion and respect to each other's views and added without which our hard earned independence would bring no good to the masses.

Referring to Shaheed President Zia, he said Zia would always remain in the hearts of millions of people for his patriotism, sagacity, courage and dedication for the cause of the people.

He (Zia) steered the nation at a time when it was passing through a turbulent period, the minister said.

Later the minister distributed food to the poor and joined a special prayer for the peace of the departed soul of Shaheed Zia.