

"Road network has shown significant development"

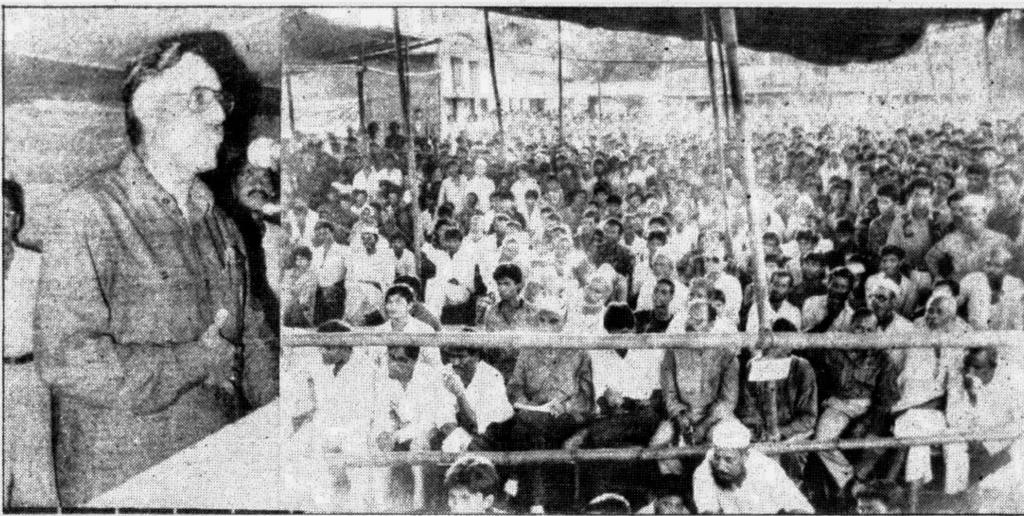
From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 19: The present government has achieved a major breakthrough in improving the country's communication network during the last three years, compare to that of the last twenty years. The Communication Minister, Oli Ahmed said this while addressing a big public meeting as chief guest at the Thana Parishad *maidan* at Biswanath in Sylhet recently.

He said, the opposition parties were unitedly trying to foil the government's development efforts. The Awami League have made alliance with the anti-liberation force and autocratic elements to unseat the democratically elected government run by the BNP, he said. The people should resist the evil motives of the opposition who were out to prevent the present pace of development and democracy, the minister added.

The communication minister in his speech, also said that the long standing demand of the lakhs of people of Biswanath, Chhatak and other adjoining thanas of Sylhet and Sunamganj districts would be met soon. Rampasha-Lamakazi road would be constructed within two years.

The meeting, presided over by Mujahid Ali, president of the Biswanath thana unit of BNP also addressed among others by, M. Murshed Khan, Special Envoy to the Prime Minister, Khondaker Abdul Malik MP, Begum Fatema Chowdhury MP, Advocate Abdul Gaffar, Abdul Quayum Chowdhury, Jamal Ahmed, Mamunur Rashid Mamun, Abdus Salam Bachhu, Jakir Hossain, Ilyas Ali. Ex-secretary of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Jalaluddin, Chairman, Biswanath Union Parishad.



SYLHET: Communication Minister Oli Ahmed speaking at a public meeting at Biswanath thana parishad premises recently. —Star photo

"Real settlement of landless people"

Some 5,000 landless families are on the threshold of getting a new lease of life under a Tk 34 crore programme that will make a huge chunk of reclaimed land in the Meghna estuary liveable, reports UNB.

They will get home, farmland, bank credit and education for their children as well as basic amenities for permanent settlement. Three chars (reclaimed land) — Char Bagadona, Char Majid and Char Bhatirtek — in Sudharam thana of Noakhali district will be developed and then populated under the three-year project beginning next month, according to the project implementation team.

The chars have been reclaimed from the estuary between Hatiya and Noakhali mainland over the years through natural process and engineering interventions.

The Netherlands government is providing the entire cost of the project as grant assistance under an agreement signed in the city with the Government of Bangladesh last week.

An estimated 12,500 acres of land, mostly barren at the moment, will be developed with access roads, embankments to stop erosion and intrusion of saline waters, and canals to drain out logged waters.

Three ministries — Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD), Irrigation and Water Development, and Land — are involved in the implementation of the project, the first such venture in large

scale. A steering committee, headed by the Irrigation Secretary, has been constituted.

A pilot project developed part of Char Bagadona in 1987 where 900 poor and landless families were given settlement.

"Successful experiment in Bagadona prompted the government and the donor to go for this large-scale project," said Anjan Datta, Advisory Team Leader of the Land Reclamation Project which is supervising the programme.

Only poor and landless families will be rehabilitated. Each family will get one hectare of farmland and a house, apart from facilities of community ponds for fishing and tubewell.

Janata Bank will provide small credits to the settlers for income generation. The credits will be guaranteed by the project.

Some 15 cyclone shelters—primary schools will also be built under the project. A few NGOs are likely to get involved with health care and income generation programmes in the project area.

"We want to ensure a real settlement of landless people. Different ministries have been involved to get things done in a well coordinated manner," said Datta.

There are frequent allegations that landless settlers, in many cases, are denied real ownership and evicted by 'jotdars'. Many also migrate after some time in absence of adequate logistic support for rehabilitation.

Minister visits erosion hit areas in Munshiganj

TONGIBARI (Munshiganj), Aug 19: Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam visited some of the erosion affected villages by the river Padma, reports BSS.

A total of about ten thousand families under Louhajang and Tongibari have been rendered homeless during the last couple of years due to erosion of the mighty Padma.

Islam talked to some of the families who have taken shelter under the open sky and expressed sympathy for them.

Later, addressing a spontaneous gathering of erosion victims at Banari Multilateral High School premises the minister said, "the government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will do everything possible to mitigate the miseries of the erosion affected families." He said the government will also rebuild all the establishments which have been eroded by the river.

A total of 15 villages under Hashail-Banari unions and Dighpara here have been badly affected by the erosion. The

estimated loss in the erosion will be to the tune of Taka eight crore, according to an official source.

The river has also devoured 275 shops, two primary schools and one madrasa including part of the Banari High School.

Erosion, 2 hundred families homeless

FARIDPUR, Aug 19: The erosion of the Padma and the Arial Kha rendered about two hundred families of eight unions under Char Bhadransar and Sadarpur police stations homeless during last fortnight.

Besides, about five thousand acres of land with standing crops were eroded into the rivers.

The affected unions include Akoter Char, Dhewkhal, Char Nasirpur, Char Manair and Diara Narikelbaria under Sadarpur police station and Char Jhaukanda, Char Bhadransar and Char Harirampur under Char Bhadransar police station.

India delaying in giving just share of Ganges waters: Salam

NAWABGANJ, Aug 19: LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukder has said that the government has been making sincere efforts for the permanent solution of the Farakka problem with a view to mitigating the sufferings of four and a half crores people of the country, reports BSS.

Addressing a public meeting at Shibganj municipal stadium yesterday after visiting some flood affected areas, Salam Talukder said that Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had made relentless efforts for securing the rightful share of the Ganges waters and for a just solution of the problem. He had also signed an agreement with India in this context, he added.

government had been delaying in giving the just share of the Ganges waters. Through its inhuman acts, India is making our people suffer during the dry season by drought and in rainy season by floods.

He announced a grant of Taka 20 lakh for the construction of the Shibganj Pourashava Building. He also mentioned the sanction of Taka 56 lakh for the municipality for the current fiscal.

The meeting was addressed by Jatiya Sangsad Whip Prof Mohammad Shahjahan Mia, Begum Lutfunnessa Hussain MP, District BNP president Sultanul Islam Momi, central vice president JCD Harun-Ar-Rashid and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Abdul Wahed.

Peter Fowler visits BARD

Peter Fowler, CMG, British High Commission to Bangladesh visited the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Comilla recently, says a press release.

Fowler met the senior Faculty members of BARD in which Md Abdul Quddus, Director (Training) gave a brief introduction about BARD's activities. He apprised the envoy of the achievements, existing programmes and future plan of the academy.

The High Commissioner appreciated BARD for its significant role played for the rural development of Bangladesh. He also visited the physical facilities of BARD including the library, Mainamati Museum and other historical places of interests around Comilla. The programme was organised by Md Mir Kashem, Joint Director, BARD.

Tk 100cr shrimp estates project soon

KHULNA, Aug 19: Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) has taken up a Tk 100 crore project to establish six shrimp industrial estates in the country. Two of these will be built in Khulna, reports UNB.

Official sources said necessary funds have been allocated to purchase land for the project which is expected to get underway next year.

The shrimp estates, to be financed by Asian Development Bank, are being designed to increase the country's shrimp production through semi-intensive production in the coastal areas.

BSCIC will build two estates at Paikgacha thana in Khulna district and Samnagar thana in Satkhira district. Two estates will be set up at sadar thana, one at Moheshpur and one at Chokoria thana in Cox Bazar district, it was learnt.

Two killed, 25 seriously hurt in road mishap

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Aug 19: Two persons were killed and 35 others injured, 25 of them critically in a road accident near Alla Government Primary School on Kishoreganj-Chamraghat highway under Karimganj thana recently.

The eye witnesses and police said, the accident occurred when a Kishoreganj-bound passengers bus bearing number Mymensingh-BA-06 from Chamraghat went out of control and fell in to the road side ditch leaving two persons killed on the spot and several others injured, critically.

The victims were identified as Gheuli, 13, a student of class VIII of Kishoreganj SV Govt. Girls High School and Sumon, 11, a student of class VI of Kazia High School.

Of the critically injured passengers two were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital while 10 at Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital and 12 at Karimganj Health Complex. Six persons were released after first aid.

Eye camp held in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent SIRAJGANJ, Aug 19: A week-long eye camp was held at Belkuchi Shishu Academy recently.

The Belkuchi Eye Camp Committee and Sirajganj Lions Club arranged for the temporary camp. Dr Israil Hossain of Bangladesh National Society for the Blind (BNSB), Sirajganj base eye hospital, conducted operation on 50 patients.

Besides, about 350 patients were provided outdoor treatment in the camp

Call to resist those who try to create indiscipline, chaos

CHUNARUGHAT (Habiganj), Aug 19: Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda Tuesday called upon the people to take part in the process of economic development of the country in the spirit of the Liberation War for making the nation self-reliant, reports BSS.

He also called for building resistance against those who were trying to create indiscipline and chaos in the country in the name of demand for a caretaker government and repeal of indemnity ordinance only to block the way for achieving economic self-reliance.

The Information Minister was addressing a public meeting at the Madhya Bazar premises of Chunarughat. The minister also addressed a conference of Jatiyatabadi Muktiuddha Dal in the auditorium of Habiganj District circuit house.

Barrister Huda laid stress on projecting the true history of the liberation war to the both present and the future generation. Those who believed in the land, people, culture and sovereignty of Bangladesh had fought the liberation war at fields and on the war fronts and made the country independent, he added.

He said our great leader late President Ziaur Rahman had announced the declaration of independence and participated in the liberation war for the country's independence.

We all have to realise the spirit of the liberation war we

have achieved political independence, but we have not been able to attain economic self-reliance. If economic self-reliance is not achieved then we will have to depend on others and concede to their condition. It is not honourable for the people of a sovereign country, he observed.

He placed emphasis on building a self-reliant country, increasing its resources and ensuring its development through cent percent domestic contribution. This should be our politics, he said.

Huda said country's manpower abroad during the time of the present government earned a lot of laurels by dint of their work and added that the government had taken up many other programmes so that the country could earn more foreign exchange by exporting its educated and skilled manpower.

The minister in this context said that the present nationalist government wanted to increase production in all fields, increase the internal resources by turning the people into an effective force.

Describing the members of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal as the soldiers of the economic struggle of the country. The minister advised them to build up themselves as trained manpower and take part in the economic activities of the country. He said, in 1971 the nation achieved political freedom and now we should fight for achieving economic emancipation of the nation.

He said the people through exercising their valuable votes

elect their representatives so that they make meaningful deliberations at the Jatiya Sangsad for the welfare of the masses.

Huda said those boycotting the Jatiya Sangsad sessions on the issue of a caretaker government were undermining the rights of their voters. He said by raising the demands for a caretaker government and repealing of the Indemnity Ordinance they wanted to embarrass the elected government.

The minister said a caretaker government consisting of some nominated people by certain quarters and not accountable to any one would always be a weak government and could never be stronger than an elected and accountable government.

They knew that no rigging was possible under the BNP government and as such had raised the boggie of "caretaker" government, the minister said.

He said these people were demanding the formation of non-representative, weak and nominated "caretaker" government so that rigging was possible under such government.

But the minister said, the government of nationalist forces believed in the people's government and not in any nominated one.

Huda called upon the people to foil any conspiracy against the rights of the people and the current efforts of the government to achieve economic and other progress.

Fish production in Habiganj district decreases

HABIGANJ, Aug 19: Fish production in Habiganj district is decreasing day by day due to lack of motivation, initiative and patronisation.

According to a survey, there are 23186 ponds in the district covering an area of 4435 acres. Out of these about 7976 ponds covering an area of 1364 acres are suitable for cultivation.

But 4089 ponds have been used for cultivation. The rest of 3887 ponds have been lying uncultivated though there is a bright prospect of pisciculture in the district.

There is a government fishery farm here at Shaistaganj. About 50 kg ranae, 5 lac fish fry and 400 kg big-size fish are produced there every year.

There is a total of 58 non-government hatcheries, nursery and farms in the district. Construction work of a large hatchery project also started at Nabiganj with the assistance of

From Our Correspondent

the government which is expected to be completed this fiscal year. When completed it will inspire the people of Nabiganj in pisciculture.

The yearly demand of fish in the district is about 27,494 metric tons. But about 24,585 metric tons fish have been produced yearly. As such about 2,909 metric tons of fish fall short per year here. Fish cultivation at Bahubal, Madhabpur and Chunerughat thanas is less than that of other thanas of the district. The fish cultivators told this correspondent that pisciculture in the district has been badly affected due to massive siltation in the rivers and different beels, canals of other water bodies. Huge quantity of fish can be produced every year if the ponds are properly utilised, the cultivators further said.

Interested fish cultivators said, they do not have enough money to continue pisciculture. They said that they are always deprived of loan and other facilities from the authorities concerned.

Due to complicated procedure the genuine cultivators also find it difficult to get loan from the financial institutions.

The fish cultivators of the district have urged the government to look into the matter and to extend necessary facilities to raise fish production.

raise fish production. Besides, some dishonest fishermen are catching fish fry by using current nets adversely affecting the growth of fish resources.

Meanwhile, the existence of the professional fishermen is at stake and finding no other alternative some of them have given up their ancestral profession for their very survival.

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District roundup

SATKHIRA

Housewife beaten to death

Aug 19: A young housewife was beaten to death by her husband at village Muragachha under Tala thana recently, hospital sources here said, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Sandha Rani (20), wife of Shyamal Biswas.

Shyamal beat Sandha as she allegedly delayed in arranging food for him. Sandha died on the spot. The body was sent to a local hospital for post-mortem.

JAMALPUR

Meeting of Apex International held

Aug 19: The board meeting of Apex International District-1 was held in Mymensingh recently, reports UNB.

Representatives of nine clubs from Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Narsingdi, Jamalpur and Mymensingh Apex Internationals were present in the meeting.

Presided over by unit governor Mahabub Abedin Rezu, the meeting was attended by former national president of Apex Bangladesh, Apexian Shah Kamal as chief guest.

The function was also addressed by Apexian Lavlu Ansar, Surya Kamal, Towhida Abedin Jhora, Mahmud Ali, Jasimuddin Sarker Ranju, Anisur Rahman, Shahidullah and Iqbal Hossain.

The speakers stressed the need for gearing up Apex activities to serve the sufferings of distressed people.

BRAHMANBARIA

Phensidyl syrup recovered

Aug 19: Police recovered a huge quantity of Indian Phensidyl syrup from a bridge on Comilla-Sylhet highway recently, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Brahmanbaria police rushed to the Malluddin Nagar road bridge and recovered 1,000 bottles of Phensidyl syrup worth about Tk two lakh.

A case was filed with Brahmanbaria police in this connection but none was arrested yet.

Meanwhile, in another raid police arrested a rickshaw-puller and seized smuggled Indian spare parts from his possession last week.

Being informed, police challenged a rickshaw-puller at Jail Road of the town and seized three bags of smuggled spare parts valued at Tk 1.32 lakh.

A case was lodged with Brahmanbaria police.

MYMENSINGH

Call to adopt scientific method

Aug 19: Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah has urged the fishermen to adopt scientific method of pisciculture to meet the demand of the country, reports UNB.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the opening ceremony of the Fish Fortnight at the Town Hall auditorium here.

The function was also attended by Keramat Ali Talukder MP and Mymensingh Municipality Chairman Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu.

During the current season, Taka 80 lakh has been disbursed as bank loan among 830 rural pisciculturists in the district to boost fish production, officials said. Loan recovery rate among the pisciculturists is 98 per cent, they informed.

Later Jute Minister Hannan Shah released some fish fries in the local pond. Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh and District Fisheries Officer were also present.

RAJBARI

Eid-E-Miladunnabi programme inaugurated

Aug 19: The district administration has planned a 6-day programme on the occasion of holy Eid-E-Miladunnabi tomorrow, reports UNB.

ADC (General) Syed Shamsul Haque inaugurated the 6-day programme at the Islamic Foundation auditorium here. The programmes include seminar, discussion meeting, Kerat competition and book fair.

NETRAKONA

Sramik Dal office opens

Aug 19: The Whip of treasury bench in Jatiya Sangsad Advocate M A Karim formally inaugurated the new office of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal Netrakona district unit at Maini Road here recently, reports BSS.

The inaugural function was presided over by Serajuddin, a local Sramik Dal leader. It was addressed among others by Nuruzzaman Advocate, joint secretary of BNP Netrakona district unit and Al-Amin Khan Pattan, general secretary of Jubodal Netrakona district unit.

Speaking on the occasion, the Whip urged the opposition MPs to attend the next parliament session for the greater interest of the nation.

Sounding a note of warning Karim said if the present democratic trend suffers any dislocation following their (opposition MPs) abstention from parliament, they would be held responsible to the people in future.

SYLHET

Old man killed in road mishap

From Our Correspondent Aug 19: An old man was killed in a road accident near Sadakhoal on Sylhet-Beanibazar road recently.

The victim Muslim Miah, 60, of village Doat while on his way to Beanibazar was knocked down by a speeding truck.

The victim died in the Sylhet M A G Osmany Medical College Hospital. The mob caught the driver of the killer truck and later handed him over to the Beanibazar PS.

KUSHLIA

Call to upgrade Kushtia General Hospital

Aug 19: Member of health services here called upon the government to upgrade 100-bed Kushtia General Hospital by increasing its strength up to 250-bed, official sources here said, reports UNB.

The urge came at an emergency meeting of the District Health Service Development Committee held at FVVTI auditorium here on Wednesday with K M Abdul Khaleque Chantu in the chair.

The meeting held an elaborate discussion on the problems of the hospital and urged the concerned authorities to take measures to upgrade the hospital by increasing the present number of beds up to 250.

The District Civil Surgeon Dr Abdus Samad also spoke on the occasion.

BARISAL

Govt poultry farm earns Tk 21 lakh

Aug 19: Government owned poultry farm at Amanatganj of the town earned more than Tk 21 lakh during last one year, reports UNB.

Some 18 acres of land have been brought under the poultry farm including a lake of 10 acres of land for pisciculture.

Official sources said the farm produced about 1.36 lakh eggs during the period. There are 7640 ducks, hens and chickens in the farm.

Local people are being interested in poultry farming day by day. Some people have already started poultry farms in the district. They said if proper patronisation and marketing facilities are ensured a large number of families will set up poultry farms.

They also urged the concerned authorities to grant soft term loans to enable them to meet up the cost basic infrastructure of the new farm.

CHUADANGA

524 acres of khasland distributed

From Our Correspondent Aug 19: A total of 524 acres of khasland has been distributed among the 2,343 landless farmer of four thanas of Chuadanga district.

Of the total land 123 acres of land has been distributed among the 574 landless people of Chuadanga sadar thana, 81 acres among 615 landless people of Alamdanga thana, 255 acres among 805 landless people of Damurhuda thana and 65 acres among 349 landless people of Jibannagar thana.



SIRAJGANJ: A cataract patient is being operated upon at Belkuchi eye camp. —Star photo