

Poor road communication, thousands suffer everyday

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Aug 31: Thousands of people of the industrially developed Haragach bandar have been facing untold sufferings for years due to absence of proper road link with Mirbagh railway station which is about five kilometres from the bandar.

There is a road in it preliminary stage in between

Trawler capsizes in Meghna

BARISAL, Aug 31: At least 10 cows drowned and eight passengers were injured in a trawler capsized in Meghna at Banimardan area of Mulaadi thana, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, the ill-fated trawler was coming to Mulaadi from Chilmari ghat with 35 passengers and 20 cows on board. The overloaded trawler suddenly capsized when it reached Banimardan.

Haragach bandar and Mirbagh, of which only one kilometre long area of the road has been developed while rest of the four-kilometre long road still remains incomplete and it has now turned quite unfit for use of vehicles as numerous pits, holes and cracks have developed on the road.

Mirbagh is the nearest railway station from Haragach bandar, it bears great importance to the people of the bandar who are shouldering immense sufferings travelling everyday through this road.

Meanwhile, due to pitiable condition of the road, people of the bandar cannot travel to the Kaunia thana headquarters through the short route using Mirbagh, instead they are traveling to and from the thana headquarters via Rangpur town covering a longer distance of more than 30 kilometres which cost twice the expenses used on the short route of Haragach-Kaunia.

One awarded death sentence in Rangpur

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Aug 31: A death sentence verdict was given in the district recently. Rajib Hossain Khan Payel was sentenced to death by hanging for murdering his ex-wife, Nasima Begum Renu, a local BNP leader.

The verdict was given by the Additional District and Sessions Judge, Shoumendra Kumar Sarkar recently. Two other accused persons, Abu Taleb Ahmed Tapan and Harunur Rashid were acquitted.

The incident of murder occurred on May 3, 1990 when Renu, divorced in 1988, entered a photo colour processing lab followed by Rajib in the evening. Rajib and Renu exchanged hot words inside the studio when at one stage Rajib stabbed Renu seriously injuring her.

The trial was conducted in absence of the main accused. Rajib has been absconding since the day of the murder.

Sreemongal Rly Station lacks basic amenities

From Our Correspondent

MOULVI BAZAR, Aug 31: The Sreemongal Railway Station of the district lacks basic amenities due to which people undergo numerous sufferings.

The Sreemongal Railway Station is an important station on Akhaura-Kulaura railway section and it is the only link route to district headquarters.

The platform of the station is not adequately covered with sheds to protect the passengers from the scorching heat, cold and rain.

Sheds with leakages in the roofs cover only two thirds area of the platform.

Consequently, the passengers can hardly take shelter under the existing sheds. Apart from this, absence of the sitting arrangement in the platform adds a lot of troubles to the passengers.

Facilities are meagre in waiting rooms. There is only one small waiting room with poor accommodation, creating sufferings to the passengers.

Besides, lack of tubewells in the platform and paucity of pure drinking water pose another problem especially during the hot spell.

Moreover, railway tracks remain dirty with garbage and night-soils, which emit a bad odour all along causing health hazard to the passengers.

The rush of the beggars and hawkers in the platform make it impossible for the passengers to move easily especially when the train arrives.

Besides, the platform has become an abode of the floating population who freely use the platform and pollute the atmosphere.

Tk 17.6cr uplift projects in progress in Chandpur

CHANDPUR, Aug 31: Government has undertaken schemes to develop about one hundred sixty seven projects at a cost of Taka 17.61 in different areas of Chandpur during the current season, reports BSS.

Besides, government has allotted eleven hundred metric tons of wheat for the purpose. The development projects include construction, reconstruction of roads, bridges, canals, construction and reconstruction of two hundred government and private primary schools and repair of fifty government primary schools.

So far seventy per cent works of these projects have been completed. These schemes have been executed by the local government engineering department. Besides, facilities

department of education ministry is implementing the development works of sixty-eight educational institutions at a cost of Tk one crore.

7 thanas of Jamalpur dist 92 pc people suffer from iodine deficiency diseases

JAMALPUR, Aug 31: At least 92 per cent people of 7 thanas of the district have been suffering from iodine deficiency diseases.

Civil Surgeon of the district Dr Askar Ali told UNB that the diseases are visible among about 57 per cent of the patients.

Quoting various survey reports conducted by foreign donor agencies, NGOs and Health Directorate, the Civil Surgeon said out of 14 lakh population of the district 12.88 lakh have been suffering from iodine deficiency diseases.

Of them the number of patients whose diseases are visible is about 7 lakh.

He said iodine deficiency causes goitre (locally known as Ghag), mental and physical retardation of children, deaf and dumb and retards normal development of brain and nervous system. The deficiency may also cause abortion and make one cross-eyed.

The iodine deficiency not only affects the man but also hampers the normal growth of animal causing dwarf and reducing production of meat, egg and milk.

He said the cause of the diseases in the region was the result of washing out of iodine from the soil due to heavy rainfall and flooding.

Ninety nine per cent people

of Jhagara union in Melandah thana have been suffering from goitre. Researchers from across the world came to the village to study the disease, he said.

The disease can be easily cured by taking of iodised salt. But due to lack of awareness the disease is spreading day by day, he said adding the government has also taken measures for checking it by enacting laws.

Under the law, salt manufacturers compulsorily have to mix iodine with normal salt in their factories.

But still there is acute shortage of iodised salt in the market. There are allegations that the iodised salt packet contain salt without iodine.

Confirming the allegation Deputy Civil Surgeon of the district Dr Mohammad Shahidullah said the Food Science and Technology Institute has been distributing 'solution for testing of iodised salt' among the consumers free of cost for confirming the existence of iodine in their purchased salt.

He said 960 field workers all over the district are making available the solution to the people and make them aware about the usefulness of the iodised salt.

Besides, injection 'Lipiodol' is being distributed among the people free of cost.



SYLHET: Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panu speaking as chief guest at the 9th installation ceremony of the Rotary Club of Jalalabad at a local hotel recently. — Star photo

96,000 families of Magura dist to get electricity

MAGURA, Aug 31: Agriculture and Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister Maj Gen (rtd) M Majid-ul-Haq Sunday inaugurated the rural electrification programme in Magura district, reports UNB.

A total of 96,000 families of 740 villages in four thanas of the district will get electricity under the Pali Bidyut programme.

About Tk 43 crore has been allocated this year in first phase for the purpose. OPEC will provide the financial assistance. About 900 kilometres distribution line will be constructed in the district under the programme.

Speaking as the chief guest the minister said the present government is providing basic amenities including electrical equipment to the doorsteps of the common people to improve their standard of life. He said electricity is one of the main ingredients of the present day civilisation.

The minister said the government is sincerely working to implement the development activities. He sought cooperation of all in continuing the pace of development and curb corruption, wastage and irregularities.

Chairman of Rural Electrification Board Brigadier M Enamul Haq also spoke.

Prices of essentials up in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Aug 31: The prices of different items essential commodities are rising up every day to the great inconvenience of consumers particularly the fixed income groups. A survey shows that the prices of each item of essential articles in different markets of the district have gone up by ten per cent on the average during the last fortnight.

A good quality rice is now selling at Tk 14.00 a kg as against Tk 13.00 a fortnight ago. *ratna balam* another variety sells at Tk 12.50 as against Tk 12.00, *jhinga shali* at Tk 13.00 as against Tk 12.00 *pa-jam* at Tk 13.00 as against Tk 12.00, *bashabo* at Tk 15.00 as against Tk 14.00 local *irri* at Tk 11.50 as against Tk 10.50 and local *aus* at Tk 11.50 as against Tk 11.00.

Moog pulse is selling at Tk 30.00 a kg as against Tk 28.00, *musur* sells at Tk 26.00 as against Tk 24.00 *chholpa* at Tk 28.00 as against Tk 22.00 *mashkalai* at Tk 28.00 as against Tk 18.00.

Ata is selling at Tk 10.00 as against Tk 9.00, flour at Tk 13.00 as against Tk 13.50.

Mustard oil is selling at Tk 56.00 a kg as against Tk 53.00, Soyabean oil at Tk 52.00 as against Tk 48.00, coconut oil at Tk 100.00 as against Tk 95.00, palm oil at Tk 42.00 as against Tk 40.00.



JAMALPUR: A well-known *beel* called, Nandina Kura in Islampur thana of the district has almost dried up due to insufficient rainfall this season. Most of the local jute growers are using the water in the *beel* for retting of the jute. Rainfall in the district was recorded quite low this season. — Star photo

Drought affects cultivation of aman in Rangpur

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Aug 31: Continued drought has seriously affected aman paddy cultivation target in the district.

About one lakh fifty three thousand hectares of land in the district were brought under aman paddy cultivation, but according to the latest report about sixty thousand hectares of land, roughly 45 per cent of the total aman cultivable land have been left untouched so far due to non-availability of adequate water.

At least 12,050 pumps for irrigation of them 250 deep, 6,250 shallow, 50 low lift and 5,500 treadle and hand tube-wells have been put into operation on the fields to pump out water for irrigation in the aman fields. Aman crop never required irrigation.

"Ashar and Sujan" months are peak period for cultivation of aman paddy, the main crop which meets at least eight

months requirement of the district. Unfortunately there were about 200 millimetre of rainfall experienced in these two months as against five hundred to seven hundred millimetre of rainfall during normal shower in the previous years that is generally to needed for sowing of the transplanted aman plants.

In the face of inadequate rains, the farmers over worried about the fate of the crop.

It may be noted that, there are large number of aman crop beds in scattered areas of the district, on the verge of damage since these have been left unutilised.

Due to use of pump waters to irrigate aman field, the farmers, it is alleged, are burdened with extra-unexpected cost of about Taka 1,50,000 for an acre of land in meeting the cost of pump water which they are taking on credit under a

contract to pay it in terms of kind that is by giving aman paddy during harvesting season at its market price.

Meanwhile, it is also alleged by a large number of farmers in the remote places of the district that a section of Power Development Board (PDB) personnel refusing to supply power for the pumps withdrew metres and asked the farmers not to put pumps into operation.

It is irony that the farmers who on an emergency basis needed to switch on the pumps to save their drought stricken crop field have been deprived the power supply to operate pumps due to non-cooperative attitude of a section of PDB field personnel who are allegedly active to earn money through back door by taking advantages of the present natural calamity.

3 villages in Narail district seriously affected by erosion

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Aug 31: Major portion of three villages under Lohagara thana in Narail district have been washed away following the continued erosion in the river Modhumati recently.

According to reports, large number of dwelling houses have been engulfed by the river along with hundreds of acres of cultivable land causing extensive damages to property belonging to poor farmers.

Reports say that all the affected family members are now living under open sky on the river embankment where they have been given shelter and are living almost in sub-human condition.

New areas of the villages were also engulfed by the river erosion affecting hundreds of people. The situation is said to be worsening every day as water level continues to rise and grab more areas.

According to information, the affected villages are Astrail, Char Ariang and Amdanga. More than twenty-five houses have been damaged while 300 acres of land have been grabbed by the river.

Reports also say that the areas of the three villages are likely to be engulfed. The rate of erosion has intensified in recent days. Some local vil-

lagers fear that the villages may vanish soon if measure to check erosion were not taken immediately. Another two neighbouring villages, Azampur and Shiarbar may also be affected by the erosion.

Affected people of the villages said that the erosion was nothing new but this year the intensity is higher. It is almost a routine disaster happening every year. But the authority is remaining silent to take any step to resist it despite the recurrence. It was alleged.

Deputy Commissioner of Narail said that measures have been taken to provide relief to the affected people.

Steps taken to implement North East Irrigation Project

SUNAMGANJ, Aug 31: Necessary steps have been taken to implement the North East Small Irrigation Project covering six districts, reports UNB.

The project will be implemented in six north-eastern districts of the country. The districts are Sunamganj, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Sylhet, Netrakona, Kishoreganj, Bangladesh Bank is financing the project with the assistance from Asian Development Bank.

The project aimed at improving the financial condition of 1.10 crore farmers of the six districts by providing irrigation facilities during the dry season, developing rural infrastructure, providing credit to the genuine dealers and import licence holders for purchasing agriculture tools and creating job opportunities.

The 3-year project was scheduled to be completed by June, 1995 but implementation of the project is lagging behind by one year, project sources said.

An orientation course and a seminar were held at Sunamganj Circuit House recently in this connection.

Deputy Director of Sunamganj Agricultural Extension Directorate M Wazed Ali presided over the seminar. Nazir Hossain, MP, Abdul Majid, MP, Deputy Commissioner Md Kamaluddin, Police Super Alhaj Md Lutfur Rahman Miah, Additional Director, Agricultural Extension Department (Comilla), Mollah Mujibur Rahman spoke on the occasion.



Professor R I Choudhury, Vice-Chancellor of Chittagong University addressing the 11th annual adjourned session of Chittagong University held recently. — CU photo

District roundup

SATKHIRA

UP member shot dead

Aug 31: A member of Balkari Union Parishad (UP) was stabbed to death by some miscreants in his house on Tuesday night, reports UNB.

Family source said some unidentified miscreants called UP member Abu Salek (35) at night out and when he opened the door they stabbed him mercilessly killing him on the spot.

The reason behind the killing could not be ascertained immediately.

The body was sent to morgue for post mortem. A case has been lodged with Sadar police.

Another message adds: Police arrested two people and recovered arms and ammunition from their possession from Sreepur Fishery Camp in Assasuni thana on Monday.

Following a tip-off police raided the camp and arrested Abul Hossain and Joinal with two country-made guns, three live cartridges and four bombs.

A case was registered with the police and the arrested were sent to jail hajat.

SIRAJGANJ

1565 posts of pry teachers lying vacant

Aug 31: Some 1,565 posts of primary teachers in the 16 northern districts have long been lying vacant hampering education of thousands of students, official sources said, reports UNB.

District-wise break up of the vacant posts are: Rangpur-214, Bogra-198, Sirajganj-138, Naogaon-127, Gaibandha and Kurigram-125 each, Dinajpur-110, Pabna-87, Rajshahi-79, Nilphamari-76, Lalmonirhat-42, Natore-63, Chapainawabganj-60, Thakurgaon-43, Joypurhat-44 and Panchagarh-34.

Local elite urged the authorities concerned to take steps to immediately fill up the vacant posts to help achieve the government target — Education for All by the Year 2000.

Local guardians alleged that many teachers of the primary schools are not regular in classroom duties. Some attend the school once in a week just to put signatures in their attendance registers.

They also alleged that there is none to look after the classroom duties of the primary teachers.

FENI

94 tonnes of wheat allocated for planting

Aug 31: Some 94 metric tons of wheat has been allocated for planting trees on both sides of two roads in Daganbhuiyan thana, reports UNB.

About 34,000 fruit-bearing and timber trees will be planted on both sides of the Baker Bazar and Baghdubi roads under Food for Works Programme, officials said.

Forest Department and the local administration will jointly begin the plantation work soon, they said.

Another message adds: The annual juvenile competition-94 of the district was held at the District Council auditorium last week.

Bangladesh Shishu Academy of the district and Zila Parishad jointly organised the competition which included patriotic and folk songs, painting and extempore speech.

A total of 60 school children aged between 5 and 12 from five thanas of the district took part in the competition.

Deputy Commissioner AMM Nurul Islam was the chief guest in the function while Ladies Club president Rowshan Islam distributed prizes among the winners.

MANIKGANJ

69,159 children, mothers immunized

Aug 31: At least 69,159 children and mothers have so far been immunized in seven thanas of the district under Expanded Programme on Immunization in the last eight months, reports UNB.

According to official sources, 19,510 children were given DPT injection and polio drops, 32,149 children BCG injections and 1,950 children measles vaccinations.

Besides 15,550 mothers were also given tetanus toxoid injections under the programme, the sources added.

The programme will continue to cover all the children and mothers of the district, it is learnt.

SYLHET

Call to maintain objectivity in reporting

Aug 31: UNB Chairman Amanullah Khan Sunday urged the local newsmen to maintain objectivity in reporting, reports UNB.

Talking to the editors of different local newspapers and the correspondents of the national dailies he said that the people have the right to know undistorted facts.

Pourashava Chairman AFM Kamal, journalists Borhan Uddin Khan, Mohiuddin Miru, Abdul Malek Chowdhury, Nurul Islam, Iqbal Kabir, Azizul Malik Chowdhury, Al Azad, Abu Hossain Chowdhury, Alhaj Badrul Islam, Aftab Chowdhury and Shafiqul Islam were present on the occasion.

KISHOREGANJ

'Ensure proper implementation of TR projects'

Aug 31: Deputy Minister for Shipping ABM Zahidul Haq Sunday asked the officials concerned to ensure proper implementation of the Test Relief (TR) projects through frequent supervision and monitoring, reports UNB.

Presiding over the District TR Coordination Committee, he said the people are now getting results of the development programmes undertaken by the government during the last three years.

Maulana Ataur Rahman Khan MP and Abdul Hamid MP were, among others, present at the meeting.

Later addressing a meeting of the district healthcare development committee, the deputy minister said "Mother and Child Health Fortnight '94" was being observed across the country to create mass awareness for promotion of mother and child health.

He called upon the people to make a success of the campaign aimed at building a healthy nation.

PATUAKHALI

Eight boat passengers drown

Aug 31: Eight passengers drowned when their speeding boat collided with a pontoon in river Pajra near Amtali thana on August 21, reports UNB.

According to a delayed message, of the victims, four bodies were recovered within the three days of the mishap. They are — Nasir, 30, Atiqur, 25, Aytun Bibi, 48, and Lucky, 18, while the bodies of other victims — Setara, 20, Minara, 20, Razia, 30, and Hanufa, 15 — could not be traced yet.

According to witnesses, the boat, coming from Gulishakhali village of Amtali thana with 20 passengers, was caught by a heavy tide, suddenly dashed the pontoon and capsized.

Ten passengers of the boat managed to swim ashore while two others — Tazamber Chaukidar, 50 and Maleka Begum, 45 — were rescued in a critical condition. They were sent to local health complex.

KUSHTIA

'Highlight rural problems'

Aug 31: Prof M A Hamid, Vice-Chancellor of Islamic University called upon the local journalists to highlight the rural problems for the interest of the rural people, reports UNB.

The Vice Chancellor was speaking as the chief guest at the souvenir publication ceremony of Kushtia District Press Club on Saturday.

Presided over by club president SM Kausar, it was attended by Deputy Commissioner of the district Md Nazrul Islam as special guest.

The Vice Chancellor said, information technology stands first among all technologies which have so far been discovered for social and economic development of the mankind. He said, the journalists are responsible for the implementation of the modern information technology.

He also said, the journalists can help a lot to change the lot of common people in a society.

The function was addressed, among others, by local newsmen Abdur Rashid Chowdhury, Mizanur Rahman and Touhidul Karim.