

## Diarrhoea claims 24 lives in Madaripur

MADARIPUR, Nov 1: Diarrhoea claimed 24 lives and affected 1200 others in sadar and Damudda thanas of the district during last one week, unofficial source said, reports UNB.

However, the district Civil Surgeon confirmed deaths of 10 people due to diarrhoea.

Official sources said that two persons died of the deadly disease at Sonamukhi village in sadar thana, and six others in Darashkati village and two in Bindakati village.

Diarrhoea broke out in the district due to paucity of pure drinking water and food, it was alleged.

The official source said, several medical teams are working in the affected areas.

Local people urged the authorities to supply water purification tablets and oral salines in the district.

## DU student commits suicide

KHAGRACHHARI, Nov 1: A student of the Dhaka University died today at Khagrachhari Hospital after taking poison, police said, reports UNB.

Rasheduzzaman Sohel, an MA final year student of Geography, allegedly took poison on Friday morning.

Family sources said Rashed came to the house of his uncle, who is working at district Civil Surgeon office, on Thursday after he had been scolded by his mother.

He was rushed to the hospital where he died today.

Rashed's father, Abdul Gani of Kutia village in Bhedorganj thana of Shariatpur district, came and took home the body.

## Plea to gear up agitation for trial of Azam

NARAIL, Nov 1: Leaders of the National Coordination Committee today called upon the people to gear up the agitation for trial of Jamaat chief Golam Azam as 'war criminal', reports UNB.

Addressing a rally at local Dakbungalow premises this afternoon, they also called for unity of the pro-liberation and democratic forces to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty.

Presided over by district National Coordination Committee leader Siddique Ahmed, the rally was addressed by Abdul Razzak MP, Kazi Aref Ahmed, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Bimal Biswas, Sharif Nurul Ambia, Dharendra Nath Shah MP and Gazi Ali Karim.

Abdul Razzak MP said forces opposed to the Liberation War are now active to jeopardise the country's independence. He criticised the government for not implementing the 4-point demand, including the trial of Golam Azam.

Prof Mannan Chowdhury said there is no alternative to struggle for establishing the values and spirit of the Liberation War.

Kazi Aref Ahmed said pro-liberation forces will have to take a political decision to fight against anti-liberation and communal forces.

## 3 killed, 20 hurt in Lalmonirhat road accidents

LALMONIRHAT, Nov 1: Three people, including an army man, were killed and 20 others injured in two separate road accidents here today, reports UNB.

The first accident happened when a Rangpur-bound microbus from Kurigram ramed into a road-side tree on the Rangpur-Kurigram road early in the morning, killing Lance Naik Chand Miah, 36, of the 30 Rifles Battalion and Yasin Ali, 40, of the village Nababosh in Kurigram on the spot.

Two other passengers were rushed to the Kurigram Sadar Hospital with critical injuries where Rafiqul Islam, 32, an employee of the Nagarshari Textile Mill succumbed to his injuries.

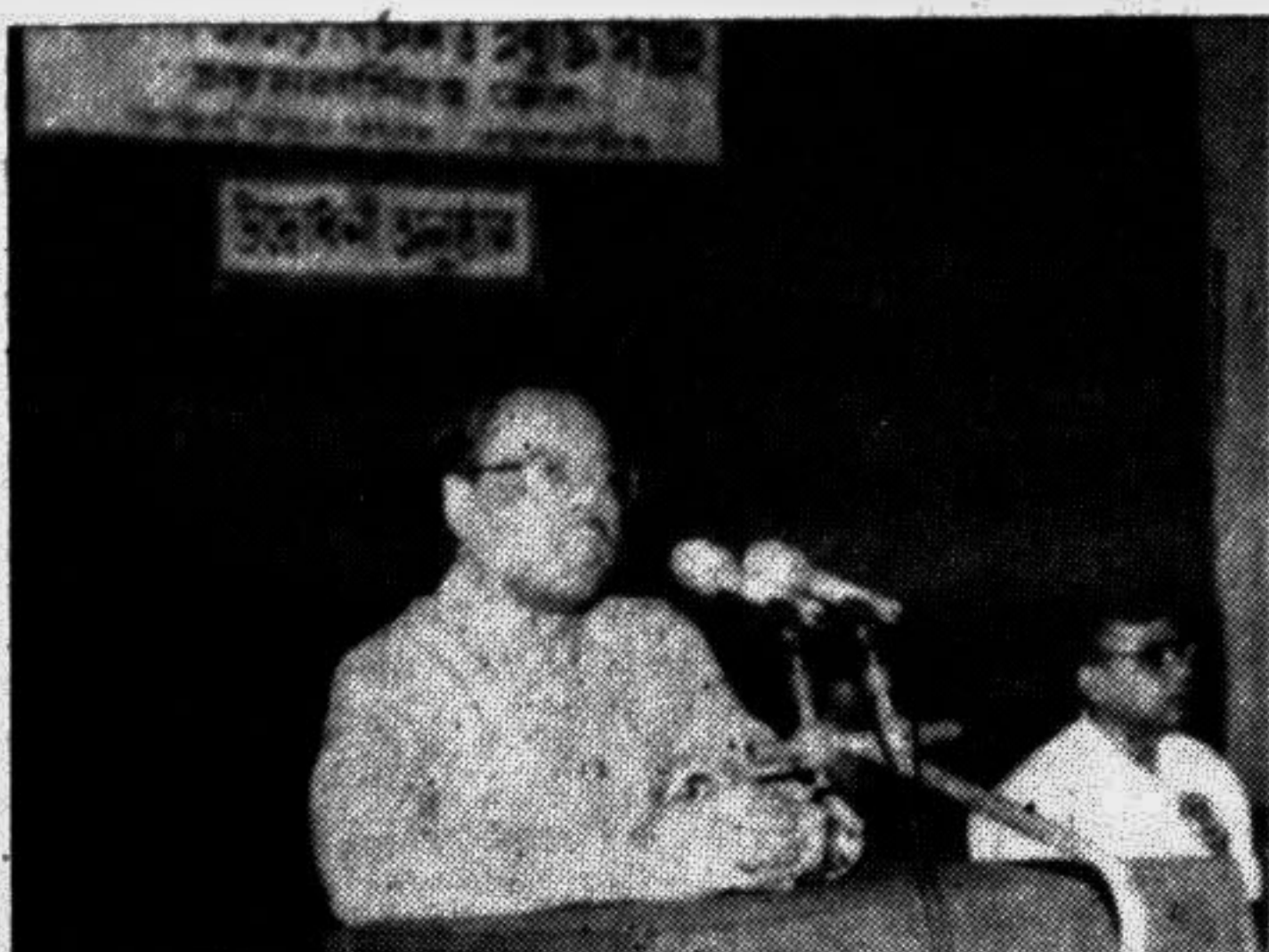
Condition of other injured, Dahir Uddin, 35, son of Badaruddin of village Hatirpara was stated to be critical.

The driver of the microbus managed to flee.

In the other accident on Lalmonirhat-Aditmari Road, 20 people were injured when a back wheel of a BRTC bus derailed about 10 am near Aditmari thana.

Over 100 passengers were travelling the bus.

The injured were treated in the Aditmari Health Complex. Two separate cases were filed with the local police.



MYMENSINGH: Vice-Chancellor of the Bangladesh Agricultural University Professor Dr Shah Muhammad Faruk speaking as chief guest at the inaugural function of the eighteenth national science and technology week organised by the Government Ananda Mohan College, Mymensingh, recently. —BAU photo

## In Kushtia town

# Allegations of irregularities at govt rice, wheat selling centres

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Nov 1: The price of rice is increasing throughout Kushtia district, according to reports received from different areas of the district.

At present the lowest quality of rice is sold between Taka 12.50 and 13.00 per kg. The fine quality of rice is sold between Taka 14.00 and 14.50 per kg, and *ata* or flour at Taka 11.00 per kg.

To face the price hike situation the Food Department has opened eight grain selling centres only in Kushtia town through dealers. Unfortunately, no such arrangements were made in other parts of the district.

At the grain selling centres coarse rice is sold at Taka 10.50 per kg and wheat at Taka 7.00 per kg. In every shop one metric ton of rice and one metric ton of wheat is supplied everyday which is alleged to be too small a quantity compared to the demands.

Everyday hundreds of men, women and children are seen standing in queue in front of the food department grain

selling shops of the town from early morning to purchase rice and wheat. The grain selling centres, it was alleged, were out maintaining time table fixed by the government. The shop owners or the dealers are reportedly opening the shops when ever they wished. There seems to be no authority to look into the matter. No Food Department officers or employees were found at any of the shops for inspection. Hundreds of people including men, women and children were found standing in queue in front of the said grain selling shops at 6 a.m. everyday to buy rice and wheat.

A number of customers alleged that the dealers do not behave well with them. Hired *mastans*, it is also alleged, sometimes abuse them when ever they form queues. As there is no arrangement for supplying rice and wheat in the rural areas at fair price the poor villagers adjacent to Kushtia town are reportedly coming to Kushtia town to buy rice and wheat at fair prices. It is also alleged that the

supply of rice and wheat in these shops are sometimes stopped without any reason leaving the customers empty handed.

Meanwhile there is no sign of reducing the price of rice and *ata* in Kushtia, town markets.

In the rural areas of the district crisis has badly affected thousands of people in absence of good aman output.

To face the situation at least 40 government managed food grain selling shops are needed to be established immediately in six thanas of the district.

It is alleged that a section of grain traders of Kushtia are buying rice and wheat in huge quantities and sell those in town areas at much higher prices.

Meanwhile another report adds: Acute scarcity of newsprint and white paper has been prevailing all over the district since last two months. As a result, the students and local newspaper publishing centers are in great trouble.

According to reports, white paper is now sold between

Taka 13 and 13.50 a bundle as against Taka nine, two months before. Newsprint is sold between Taka 470 and 480 per ream as against the government rate of Taka 280.00.

Further, prices of other types of papers like thin paper, offset and colour papers have also increased.

Six dailies namely, the Dainik Bangladesh Bara, Dainik Sutrapat, Dainik Andolener Bazar, Dainik Kushtia, Dainik Gramer Dak, Dainik Dinner Khabar and eight weeklies are published from Kushtia district.

Local people alleged that some dishonest traders are creating artificial crisis in the markets. While talking to some of the traders it was clear that sufficient quantity of newsprint and white paper were available for the traders.

Local leaders have urged the concerned authorities to probe into the matter and take immediate steps against the dishonest paper traders responsible for creating artificial crisis in the markets.

## Milk production declines in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent KUSHTIA, Nov 1: Milk production has been decreasing in Kushtia district.

According to reports, the number of milch cows have rapidly decreased in the district over the years. The production of milk, as a result has declined drastically in the district.

Fresh grass needed for milch cows is not adequately available now a days. At present grass is not grown like it used to be before because of the pattern of crops grown with the introduction of mechanised system of cultivation. A major portion of grass land has been brought under IRRI-boro cultivation. Earlier kehasari, mash kolai were grown on these land. These crops were profusely used as fodder for cows.

## Students stage demonstration to press home their demands

PABNA, Nov 1: Islami Chhatra Shibir activists Saturday staged a demonstration in front of the district administrative office to press home their 2-point demands, says UNB.

The activists were demanding release of Shibir leaders — Sharifull Islam Sharif and Mozilul Islam Babu and ban on the politics of Bangladesh Worker's Party and Chhatra Maitri.

They chanted slogans in favour of their demands and later submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner.

## 113 centres will be opened to sell rice, wheat in Pabna

PABNA, Nov 1: Some 113 dealers have been appointed for open market sale of rice and wheat at fair prices in nine thanas of the district to ensure a stable supply of food in the area, an official source said, reports UNB.

Of them, 99 centres will sell wheat and 14 centres will sell rice. Each of them will sell about one ton of wheat and rice every day, according to the district food controller.

Price of rice has been fixed at Tk 10.50 per kg and wheat Tk 7 per kg.

The district has a stock of 2,600 metric tons of rice and 2,800 tons of wheat which can meet the demand for six months in the area.

But some local people alleged that they could not buy rice at fair prices as a section of dealers, with the help of some officials and employees, were selling rice in the black markets.

## Officers' posts remain vacant in thana health complexes

MADARIPUR, Nov 1: Some 154 posts of officers and employees are lying vacant in four thana health complexes, 18 health centres and sadar hospital for a long time, official sources here said, reports UNB.

The vacant posts included, senior consultant - 3, resident medical officer - 1, medicine expert - 2, gynecologist - 2, dental surgeon - 4, night guard - 5, sweeper - 2, dustman - 1 and a gardener.

Some officials including two resident medical officers, two surgical experts, one dental surgeon and 17 medical officers are staying in the capital for the last two years after having official appointment. These people are reportedly doing private practice, the sources added.

## Plans to build sluice gates in Barguna

PATUAKHALI, Nov 1: The Water Development Board (WDB) has taken up a programme to construct six drainage-cum-flashing sluice gates in Barguna district in the current financial year, official sources said, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, about Tk 2.93 crore has been sanctioned for implementation of the scheme which was financed by the Dutch Government.

The drainage-cum-slucice gates will be constructed in Khol Patua, Teler Barani, Khejria, Katakhal, Karuna and Jalsha areas of the district.

On completion of the scheme, more crop is expected to be grown on vast areas of Bamna and Betagi thanas, the sources added.

## BKB to give Tk 10 cr agri loan in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Nov 1: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has taken an intensive programme to distribute Taka ten crore loan among the farmers in six thanas through their branches in the district.

According to a BKB official, Taka three crore 48 lakh 62 thousand will be given as agricultural loan, Taka three crore three lakh 70 thousand will be given for dairy farm development and livestock development, Taka 17 lakh 61 thousand for fish cultivation, Taka 61 lakh 53 thousand for purchasing irrigation and agricultural equipment, Taka 92 lakh 71 thousand for socio-economic development, Taka 10 lakh for other programmes and Taka 56 lakh 40 thousand for agribased industrial loans, among the farmers of six thanas in Jhenidah sadar, Sailkupa, Harinakundu, Kaliganj, Kotchandpur and Mohespur.

The regional manager of the bank informed that in last fiscal year (1993-94) BKB distributed Taka three crore 62 lakh, Taka three crore 85 lakh was recovered from the farmer within the period.

The field officers were trained well to distribute and recover loans properly, the source said.

Another report adds: The Facilities Department of Education Ministry has so far spent Taka five crore 96 lakh 85 thousand for construction and supply of furniture to various educational institutions in Jhenidah district in the current fiscal year.

According to sources furniture were supplied to eight non-government high schools, two non-government colleges, two government colleges, one girls high school and 13 government primary schools of Jhenidah sadar thana. Electricity was also supplied to each of the schools, it was informed.

## 550 mt of wheat allotted for 380 projects in Barisal

BARISAL, Nov 1: Government has sanctioned 550 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 380 projects in the district under Test Relief Programme (TRP), during the current season, reports BSS.

According to district relief and rehabilitation office sources, the projects to be implemented include the repair and reconstruction of roads, bridges, levelling of fields, clearing of bushes, jungles and water hyacinths, and repair of educational and religious institutions.

Of the total 56 metric tons of wheat will be used for the implementation of 40 projects in Barisal sadar thana, 76 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 47 projects in Bakerganj, 46 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 28 projects in Muladi, 45 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 27 projects in Hizla, 65 metric tons of wheat for the implementa-

tion of 30 projects in Mehendigonj, 41 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 23 projects in Babugonj, 58 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 35 projects in Wazirpur, 39 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 78 projects in Banaripara, 49 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 26 projects in Gournadi, 45 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 25 projects in Agailjhara, 27 metric tons of wheat for the implementation of 18 projects in Barisal paurashava, two metric tons of wheat for the implementation of two projects in Bakerganj and one metric ton of wheat for the implementation of one project in Banaripara paurashava.

Work on these projects has already started and over 65 per cent has so far been completed, the source said.

The work of the projects is expected to be completed in November this year.

## Poor shape of schools

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Nov 1: Education in Fulchari thana is facing set back due to lack of teachers, equipment, furniture etc.

Fulchari is a tiny thana in Gaibandha district with a small population of only one lakh 50 thousand which has 112 different educational institutions. A total of 23,053 children are provided education facilities in these institutions. Out of the total number of the institutions there are one private college, 7 high schools, one girls high school, one senior madrasa, eight junior madrasas, two secondary schools, five dakhil madrasas, 49 government primary schools, 21 registered primary schools, 27 unregistered primary schools and three community schools.

Out of the total number of schools, four have already been devoured by the erosion of river Brahmaputra. Most of the schools in this thana, housed in a single tin-shed room, have

no adequate furniture and black boards. In many schools students are to take lessons sitting on the floor.

Many of the school buildings hit by the natural calamities like, storm, tornado and floods have not been repaired. Local people pays little interest to reconstruct the schools leaving them in dilapidated condition for years.

Shortage of teachers is another problem. In many schools only two or three teachers are to conduct lessons.

## 2 Magura colleges closed sine die

MAGURA, Nov 1: Two colleges of the district were closed sine die today following clashes between the student wings of ruling BNP and the opposition Awami League, reports UNB.

## 'Bottom-up approach needed for development planning'

BRAHMANBARIA, Nov 1: A district-level consultation meeting for formulation of a participatory perspective planning for the country was held Saturday at the zila parishad hall here with State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan in the chair, reports BSS.

State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Harun-ur-Rashid also attended the meeting.

The Planning Commission organised the meeting in co-operation with the district administration as a part of the process of formulating a pragmatic plan in consultation with the people of different parts of the country and keeping in mind their respective socio-economic requirement.

Addressing the meeting, the State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Harun-ur-Rashid said that the present government had laid emphasis on a participatory and bottom-up approach in plan formulation instead of conventional top-down approach.

He said that without proper participation of the people of all walks of life a pro-people development plan could not be formulated and at the same time implemented properly.

Rashid said, the present government was pledge-bound to ensure welfare and development of the country through proper planning for poverty alleviation, productive employment generation, human re-

sources development and mass education.

Speaking on the occasion Dr Moyeen Khan said that local demand and priorities must be ascertained for a participatory perspective planning. He also stressed the need for mobilisation of local resources and coordination for the purpose.

The state minister for planning said that consultation with cross section of local people was essential for preparation of an integrated long term plan.

The inaugural session was addressed by Syed Morshed Kamal, MP, Begum Asia Rahman, MP, Planning Secretary Dr Harunur Rashid, IMED, Secretary Shafiqur Rahman, Planning Commission members Mosfiqur Rahman, Syed Ahmed, Asafuddinullah and Nazmul Ahsan.

## Woman crushed under wheels of train

BRAHMANBARIA, Nov 1: An unidentified woman was run over by a Dhaka bound Urmil Aruna Express near a rail gate here on October 24, reports UNB.

The victim aged about 25 years, was knocked down and crushed under the wheels of the train while she was crossing the railway track. She died on the spot.

## Bhairab-Ashuganj ferry ghat Demand for bridge over Meghna

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Nov 1: The need for construction of Bhairab-Ashuganj bridge over the river Meghna is being felt very keenly by the people of the area with a view to ensuring uninterrupted road communication on Dhaka-Sylhet-Brahmanbaria highway and also connecting Bhairab and Ashuganj, the two riverports of the country.

Hundreds of passenger buses, trucks, government and private cars and jeeps ply over the two highways round the clock to different destinations including Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Brahmanbaria and Comilla districts headquarters.

But the smooth plying of all sorts of vehicles is hindered greatly on the highways due to the existence of a ferry service in the river Meghna in between Bhairab and Ashuganj.

The transportation of vehicles from one side to another by

ferry boats takes normally an hour, sometimes more than 3 hours. Apart from this, movement of ferryboats with heavy vehicles become hazardous during the stormy weather, it is observed.

Besides, the rush of rickshaws at Bhairab and Ashuganj ferryghats on Dhaka-Sylhet

highway poses a serious problem everyday. People and the vehicles are facing difficulties while moving onto the ferryboats at Bhairab and Ashuganj ghats.

On the other hand, the easy transportation of merchandise from Bhairab to Ashuganj and vice versa is also hindered due to the absence of direct road link between the two riverports. Besides, heavy commercial dealings like shipment of gains and fertilizers between the two ports cost much higher.

According to reports the government has plans to construct a bridge over the river Meghna in between Bhairab and Ashuganj. A Japanese river expert team also made an on the spot feasibility study few months ago, it was learnt.

However, the construction of the bridge in the river Meghna for the greater interest of the country as a whole required immediately.

## One arrested for killing his wife

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 1: Police arrested Gopi Chandra Das at Balidah in sadar thana on Saturday for killing his wife, reports UNB.

Police said, Gopi hit his wife Kalpana Rani with a kitchen knife on Thursday as she refused to bring dowry money Tk 2000 from her parents.

## A road badly needs reconstruction work

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Nov 1: The seven kilometre long Wobaydullah road which runs from Shahbazpur to Shahzadpur connected with Dhaka-Sylhet highway under Sarail thana of Brahmanbaria district is in poor shape due to severe damages caused following floods in 1988 and 1991 disrupting transportation of agricultural products.

In 1972 Wobaydullah road was constructed from Shahbazpur to Shahzadpur under Sarail thana of the district. It runs through the Shahbazpur and Shahzadpur unions facilitating some 12 thousand dwellers of the adjoining areas of the road for direct communication.

In the same year a devastating flood severely damaged the road and the turbulent wave and current of the flood water damaged one km long road near Shahbazpur. Later the damaged parts of the road was reconstructed by the authorities in winter season. But lack of proper maintenance the road gradually lost its capacity to serve its purpose. About two km long road from Majaish to Shahbazpur was totally damaged disrupting traffic movement.

In 1988 a devastating flood also eroded part of the road and damaged three RCC bridges and a box culvert causing permanent disruption of traffic movement. In

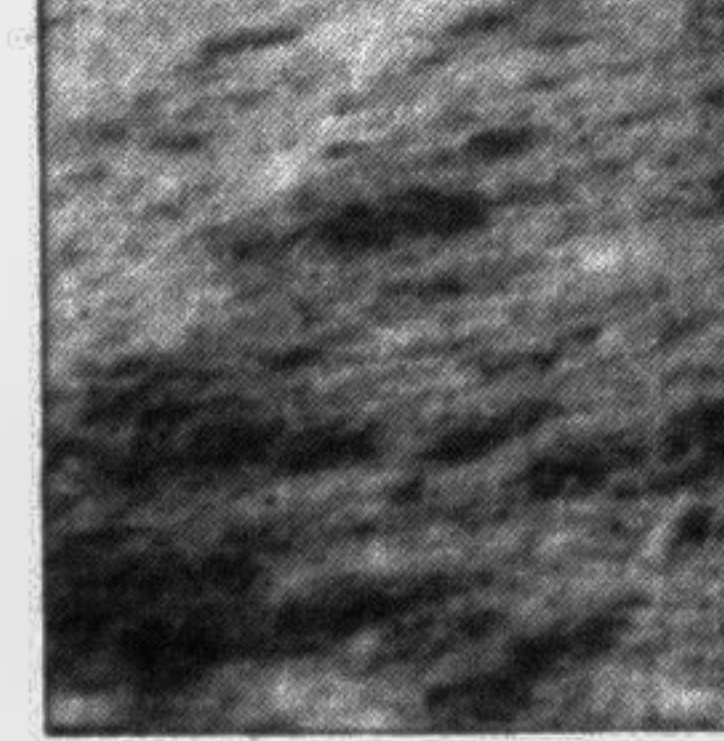
Shahbazpur union where 95 per cent people heavily depend on transportation of paddy. The road communication since then remain snapped. Agricultural inputs like, fertilizer, seeds, fuel etc are hard to transport in absence of the road communication.

Farmers carry their produce and other materials seven kilometre long distance along the road. As a result of such situation, the cost of agricultural produce in the villages has increased to a great extent.

In absence of marketing facilities the farmers are selling their produce at much lower rates.

Again in 1991 a country wide flood damaged this part of the road and isolated the Shahbazpur with other areas of Sarail thana.

The farmers, students and the officials are facing untold suffering in absence of communication.



BRAHMANBARIA: Shahbazpur to Shahzadpur Wobaydullah road damaged due to devastating floods in 1974, 1988 and 1991 disrupting road communication — Star photo