

Flood situation remain unchanged in seven dists

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, July 14: The flood situation of Gaibandha district is still unchanged. River Brahmaputra and Ghagot are still flowing over danger mark.

According to Water Development Board (WDB), main embankment along the western bank of river Brahmaputra at Faliarghop under sadar thana breached near the third groyne constructed by Flood Action Plan (FAP) and about 600 feet of the embankment was washed away by the surging water badly damaging the adjacent groyne. Gushing water entering through the breach of Brahmaputra Embankment aggravated the flood situation. A village near the breach was washed away. Out of six groyne one has already been damaged by the surging water while another went into the water completely. Flood Action Plan this year completed six groyne along the western bank spending Tk 200 crore to halt the widespread erosion.

Postal communication in 13 sub-post offices located in different areas of the district remain suspended following disruption of road communication and inundation of offices.

People of Gaibandha fighting the severe flood since July 6 are passing days with untold sufferings for want of food and drinking water. Any relief goods is yet to reach to several lakh flood victims in remote areas.

Agency report adds: New areas under Gobindaganj and Palashbari thanas were submerged by flood water although it receded from some areas in Gaibandha town in the last 24 hours on Thursday. Two persons — Shafti, 14 of Gajaria under Fulchhari thana and Ekabbar, 60, were killed by lightning Tuesday night.

Water born diseases have broken

The total crop lands with standing crops on it under Char Madhabdia, North Channel and a portion of De-creeer Char unions has gone under water. Akoter Char, Char Nasirpur, Diara Narikalbaria, Char Monair, Char Bis

and Brahmaputra are still above the danger mark.

Four persons died of diarrhoea and 20,000 others were attacked with diarrhoea in the flood affected areas. The flood affected people are suffer-

Faridpur thana and Subhas Chandra, 50, of Gonopodia village in Bera thana.

Doctors attributed the spread of this water borne diseases for scarcity of safe drinking water.



BOGRA: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia distributing relief among the flood affected people of Sariakandi in Bogra on Wednesday. — PID photo

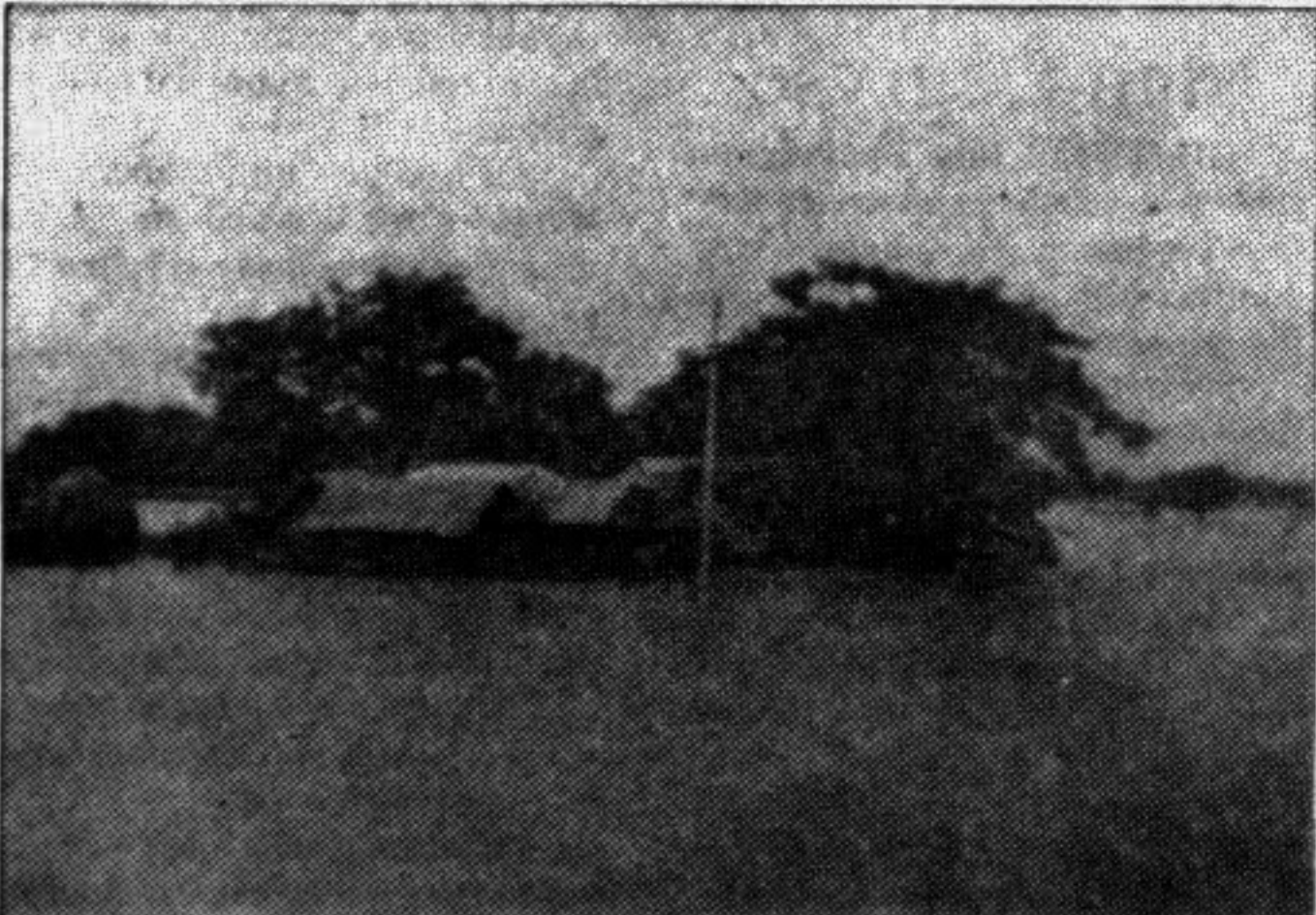
ing for lack of food, medicine and drinking water. The government relief supply is inadequate, said a number

Meanwhile, 22 medical teams were working in the affected areas to combat the disease.

In Manikganj, fresh areas in sadar and Singair thanas of the district went under flood water Thursday deteriorating the overall flood situation, reports UNB.

Water level in Padma at Faridpur is increasing alarmingly threatening breaches in the flood control embankment. Faridpur town may experience inundation if the situation continues to worsen, according to reports received from our correspondent on Friday morning.

of local people. Meanwhile, agency reports received till Friday morning say, in



GAIBANDHA: Dwellings of sadar thana of the district submerged by flood waters. — Star photo

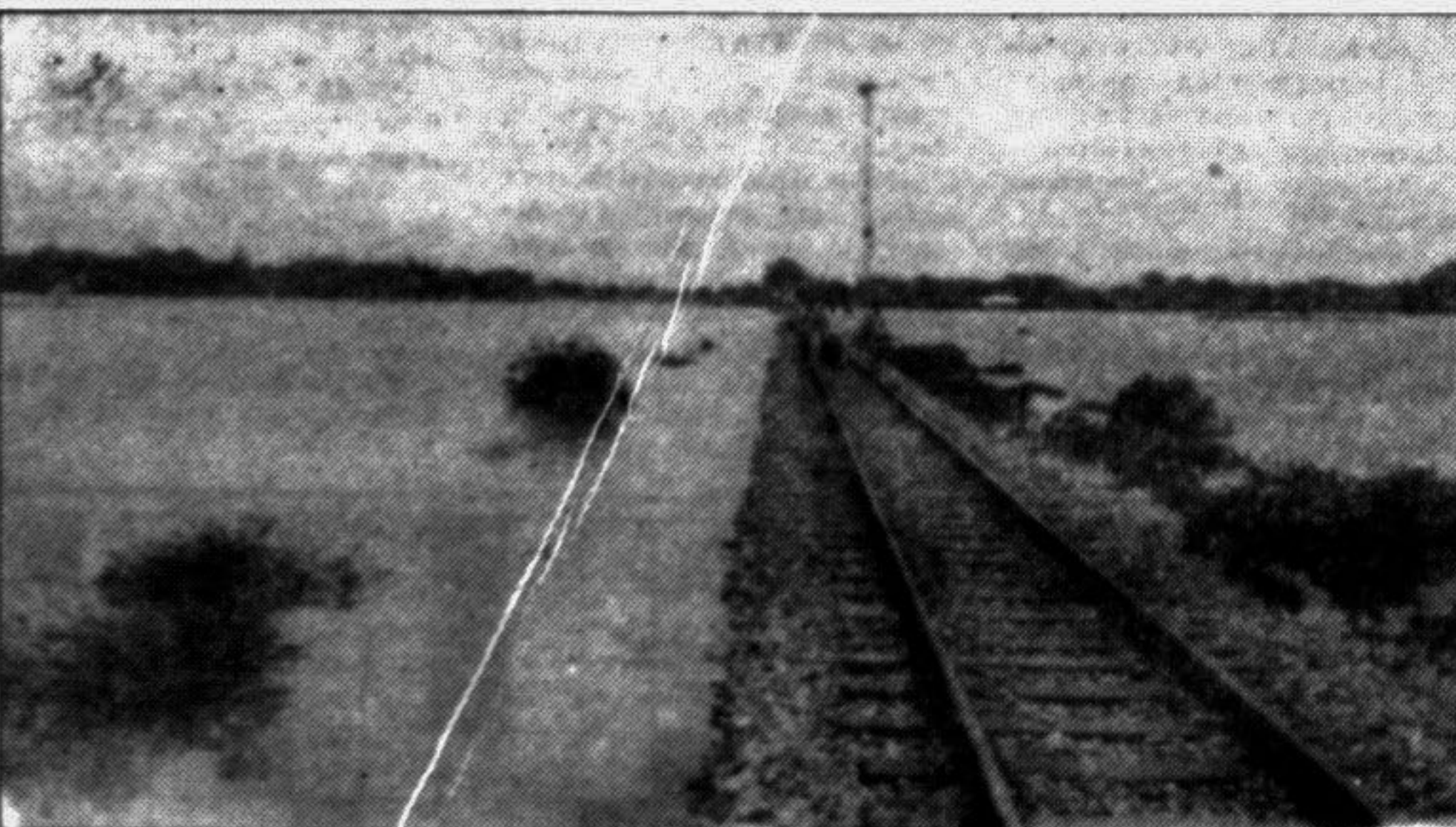
out in various flood affected areas. The Civil Surgeon confirmed that 60 persons were suffering from diarrhoea and one person have died of it. Live-stock Department confirmed that 269 cattleheads perished in different parts of the district.

Our Correspondent from Faridpur says: Flood situation of the district has further deteriorated following incessant rain during the last four days causing abnormal rise of water level in the river Padma and its tributaries flowing across the district. As a result, more than one lakh people have been marooned and crops on 15 thousand acres of land were destroyed in Kotwali, Sadarpur and Char Bhadrans thanas. Town Protection

severe. An agency report says: More areas of the district were flooded due to rise in water level in river Padma, Arial Kha and Kumar.

According to an official sources, three unions of Faridpur sadar, three unions of Char Bhadrans, two unions of Bhangra and four unions of Sadarpur thana have been affected by flood water.

The source said that most crop lands of these areas have been inundated. The exact loss could not yet be assessed. People of these affected areas have taken shelter in nearby embankments and other high land. However, no loss of life was reported so far.



GAIBANDHA: Railway track at north outer signal of Gaibandha station is on verge of inundation. The picture was taken on Wednesday. — Star photo

Embankment is threatened by the onrush of water from the Padma. The embankment may collapse at any moment due to the heavy pressure of water on its northern side and the town may be flooded.

Our Correspondent from Jamalpur adds: The flood situation remained unchanged in Jamalpur district. Out moment due to the heavy pressure of water on its northern side and the town may be flooded.

Pabna, diarrhoea claimed three lives and attacked 50 people in different parts of the district in last three days. The dead were identified as Ratan, 4, of Sonahara village and Badsha Miah, 35, of Bhadal village in

They said parts of the rail line between Goalanda Bazar and Daulatdia was on the verge of being inundated. But train services still remained uninterrupted as sand bags were placed to save the rail track from flood water.

Ninety kilometres of road, 12 bridges and culverts were damaged partially by the onrush of flood water. About 1300 dwelling houses were completely damaged and 2,500 houses partially.



PABNA: People rendered homeless by flood, erosion search for new place to settle. — Star photo

Bank manager arrested for forgery

MEHERPUR, July 14: Police arrested the manager of Sonali Bank of Gangni branch on charge of forgery of Tk 12 lakh and produced him in the district court on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The accused, Ruhul Amin Mollah, allegedly drew Tk 12 lakh through forgery of a pay-order of Tk 12 lakh only.

Police said Shafiqul Islam of Chatmohor thana of Pabna district issued a pay-order of Tk 12 lakh on December 12, 1994, from United Commercial Bank Limited of Dhaka Northbrook branch.

Later, Islam came to Gangni and reached an agreement for supplying bamboo with local contractor Abdul Mannan. Islam then deposited the pay-order to the current account of Mannan tampering it into Tk 12 lakh.

Later, Shafiqul drew Tk 12 lakh at several instalments in collusion with Abdul Mannan. Following confusion, Reconciliation Department of Sonali Bank head office sent a team to investigate the matter and AGM Raihunnudin filed a case according to head office order on July 11.

BAU examinations resumes on August 5

MYMENSINGH, July 14: The postponed examinations of 1990 of Bangladesh Agricultural University will be resumed from August 5, reports UNB.

The examinations, MSc (Vet Science) in Obstetrics, Physiology, Parasitology, Pathology, Pharmacology and Medicine, and MSc (Ag Engineering) in Farm Structure.

The schedule of the examinations will be announced later, said a press release.

Work on Chalan Beel project unlikely to resume shortly

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, July 14: The work on Chalan Beel project is likely to remain incomplete for want of fund even this year, it is learnt.

The work on the Taka 44 crore project was started in 1976 and it was stopped in 1984 for financial crisis. Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) started the project in this region with a view to control flood and extraction of water. The Chalan Beel project areas includes Natore, Pabna, Sirajganj and Bogra districts. World Food Programme (WFP) and International Development Agency (IDA) financed the project.

The project includes construction of 200 km long flood control embankment, digging of 300 km long canal, building of 24 regulators, 250 sluice gates, 55 bridges and culverts.

One hundred ninety seven km of flood control embankment, 104 km of canal, 12 regulators, 93 sluice gates and three bridges were completed till 1984, a BWDB source informed.

The work on the project was stopped following a dispute over construction of a regulator at the mouth of the river Baral near Charghat thana of Rajshahi, the BWDB sources alleged.

At the beginning of the 1993-94 financial year, the Board expected to start the incomplete works of the project in 1994. But the effort failed and new efforts were taken to start the project during this year. But the works are unlikely to start during the current year as well for fund crisis.

Thousands of farmers of the beel areas under the scheme have been

suffering much for keeping the project incomplete.

The completion of the project could help produce an additional amount of food grains worth about Taka nine crore on 2.14 lakh acres of land under the project area.

The World Bank, however, assured rehabilitation of the project with the financial assistance of some donor agencies. The implementation of the rehabilitation programme needs about Taka 10 crore but no donor agency has yet agreed to finance the project.

The rehabilitation work includes construction of 426 kilometre long embankment, digging of 356 km of canal, construction of 16 regulators, 57 sluice gates, 171 km long road, four bridges and 47 culverts, it is learnt.

The BWDB has taken up a decision to start the rehabilitation programme with the surplus fund of the project in FCD. But the Board will not be able to complete the work, it was learnt.

Only river fire station can solve the problems

From CHT Correspondent

RANGAMATI, July 14: To protect lives and properties of six riverian thana including a vast areas of sadar thana of Rangamati hill district, the bare necessity of setting-up a river fire station was being ignored by the authority despite repeated mass appeal, local tenders and social workers alleged.

Properties worth over Taka eleven crore were consumed by fire in the six thanas of Baghaichhari Langadu, Belaichhari, Zurachhari Borkal and Naniachar of the district during the last four years from 1991-1994. Fire broke out 196 times in those thanas and burnt properties to ashes almost unabated as there is no authority to extinguish. The year-wise break-up of fire incidents break out in those thanas is as follows: 1991—36, 1992—49, 1993—43 and 1994—65 times, officials said.

Julaikyapara, Puraton Bosti, Jaliapara, Honumantali, Razbari, Chakrapara, Razbonbhar, Katchharipara and Barumapara within the municipality area of sadar thana including those six thanas of the district were segregated from road communication on erection of Kaptai dam on Karnaphuli river in 1960 connecting those places with riverian routes.

In existing two fire stations, one at Rangamati district headquarters and the other at Karnaphuli Hudro Station, Kaptai, virtually can do nothing in case of any fire havo breaks out at any thana surrounded by Kaptai lake, said Rehanuddin, president of the district unit of Awami League, adding that no fire fighting boats on divers were also provided with these fire stations.

63 fire arms seized in 6 months from Satkhira

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, July 14: A total of sixty three fire arms, ninety two ammunitions and seventy three live explosives were recovered by Satkhira police from different areas of the district during a period of last six months commencing from January '95 to June 1995.

This was disclosed by Sanaul Haq, Police Super of Satkhira district while talking to the local correspondents of different dailies at his office chamber on July 5.

Out of the total arms, one foreign revolver, eleven country made revolvers, fourteen country made guns, one double barrel gun, one foreign made gun, one 303 rifle, and thirty

four pipe guns were recovered from different areas of seven thanas of the district during the period, he said.

He further added that a total of two thousand eight hundred forty five criminals were arrested on different charges from different areas of the district. Of them, two hundred ninety five were arrested on charge of different heinous cases like dacoity, toll collection, illegal possession of arms. Police also arrested nine gangs of dacoits while they were preparing to commit dacoities in nearby villages during the period, he added.

A total of seven hundred seventy six cases were lodged with seven police stations during the period.

Substantial loss in pisciculture in Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, July 14: About 2,000 fisheries projects in seven thanas of the district have been severely affected due to the recent heavy downpour and flood in the district.

According to district Fisheries Department sources it was learnt that there was heavy downpour and flood for the last few days. As a result fish farming sustained great losses as huge number of fish reared in the fisheries project including ponds, *Jalmahals* and duggies escaped with the flood water.

The sources said, fisheries project, under government and non-government initiatives in the district have been greatly affected due to rise in water level followed by continuous rain.

District Agricultural Extension department sources said *aus*, jute, sugar cane, *aman* seed beds and other

rabi crops in all seven thanas of the district in over 25,000 acres of land went under water causing financial loss of the growers during the last one month.

According to official sources, due to heavy downpour about 500 km long *kattha* road and 40 kilometre long embankment has totally or partially been damaged.

Another, newly constructed *pucca* road on Mahmudpur to Madarganj and Madarganj to Hajipur bazar was partially affected by the heavy downpour and flood water.

The worst affected thanas are, Dewanganj, Islampur, Melandal and Sarishabari.

Meanwhile, water level is rising everyday in the district. The water level of the two major rivers, Jamuna and Brahmaputra said to be above the danger level at Bahadurabad ghat and Dewanganj point.

Momena Begum's poultry farm An example to follow

From Delwar Kabir

MAGURA, July 14: Devotion, hard-labour and confidence can make a plan success. Momena Begum of Salikha thana has recently proved it.

Momena Begum, age 25, a housewife, lives in her thana parishad quarter residence. But her husband Sattar Talukder desired to change her life style and helped Momena to establish a small poultry farm on the roof of their house.

Momena Begum informed that last year she raised about one thousand chickens of improved varieties. She sold some of the little birds to Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) or other NGOs and nursed about 300 hens which gave her about 240 eggs a day. She earned an average of Taka

350 to 400 excluding the input costs. Momena informed.

While visiting, this correspondent saw at least one hundred hen in her farm. Now she earns an average of Taka 80 per day.

Momena also informed that her programme was successful due to cooperation extended from her husband who is the Assistant Rural Development Officer ARDO, of BRDB Salikha thana.

She established her farm without any financial assistance from any NGO or from other sources.

If some one intends to do something good, he or she should be honest, sincere and hardworking. Momena said.



MAGURA: Momena Begum feeding her chickens in her roof-top poultry farm. — Star photo

Determination, devotion can change one's life

By Masud Arif

MYMENSINGH, July 14: Fourteen years have passed, life has dramatically changed. But Sohrab could still recall those days — full of uncertainty and frustration. Those were the days when Sohrab was simply a dreamer like anyone else. Poverty and joblessness made his life miserable.

Only 350 taka, a loan from BRAC, was Sohrab's investment to do all which has changed his life. Sohrab, a poor farmer fourteen years ago, had no belonging except a thatched house on one *kattha* of land surrounded by green paddy fields in Bauliagara, a small village at Trisal of Mymensingh district.

Today Sohrab can afford to send his son to University and no longer allows his children, two sons and a daughter to do any job except studying.

Trisal thana is located about eight kilometres from Mymensingh town on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway and some four kilometres of muddy village path from the highway.

A green typical Bangladeshi village where lives Sohrab Ali, a successful peasant who has translated his dreams into the reality of life.

A landless poor in Bauliagara village, Sohrab now believes that determination and devotion can change one's life. It is not tough to break the barriers of poverty.

Sohrab now owns a piece of arable land near his house which cost about Tk 1.2 lakh. He himself cultivates in his land and the profit he makes out of selling the produce is not less than 12 thousand taka a year.

'This is my satisfaction. There were days when I had to cultivate on someone else's land to manage my livelihood,' says Sohrab. The amount I was paid after a day-long hard work was very poor'.

Sohrab's eldest son, Abdul Halim, is now a student of class ten and two others are studying in class nine and

six. 'I can afford money now to send my children to school because only education can ensure their better life,' Sohrab realises.

In addition, Sohrab's wife also helps the family. She knits handkerchiefs and earns money by selling the item in local village market.

Sohrab is a small rice trader in his locality. He earns Tk 3,500 a month for family expenditures from his business.

Change in Sohrab's life has not occurred in a day. It was not even a magic or no one gave him a push for take-off. The success he has achieved is the result of devotion, determination and Tk 350 loan from BRAC which encouraged the poor Sohrab to start his journey towards a prosperous life.

In the initial stage, Sohrab used to buy rice grain, husk those manually in his house and sell the rice to the local market. With the profit increasing gradually he started husking the rice in a local traditional mill. Within few years, Sohrab saved a big amount and opened a small shop in the road-side bazaar in Bauliara. Besides, he also gets about 40 *mounds* of rice from his own land now.

Sohrab also thinks for future and that's why he saves small amount of money every month. He is still attached with BRAC's, Rural Development Programme and is also the group leader of their Village Organisation.

In addition, Sohrab realises the positive side of having small family and friendly relationship with wife. Moreover, he feels that everyone has to do something for the development of the country. He encourages his colleagues to do any job like poultry farming, irrigation, fish culture and so on.

For Sohrab it took long fourteen years to realise all these.