

FAP-20 authorities say

It will be an effective project, NGO leaders give reverse views

TANGAIL, July 18: A vast area under the foreign-aided ambitious Flood Action Plan-20 for the first time came under the monsoon flood onslaught that wrought havoc on localities in the Brahmaputra basin, says an UNB report.

Officials of the Compartmentalization Pilot Project (CPP) in Tangail and Sirajganj districts, popularly known as Flood Action Plan (FAP) 20, said the flooding in part of the scheme area occurred as their works had not yet been completed.

"Our experience showed that such kind of project would be feasible for flood control in the country and also acceptable to people," FAP 20 Project Director Nurul Alam told a group of newsmen who visited the project area in sadar thana here on Sunday.

However, the Non Government Organisation (NGO) leaders, gave reverse views.

"Flood is a natural phenomenon in Bangladesh and our observation said there was no need to launch such kind of controversial project costing crores of taka which already created a haphazard situation," they said.

The NGOs at national and

local levels have been opposing the project from the very beginning as, they said, it will decrease land fertility and fish resources, hamper navigation and destroy ecological balance in the area.

Official sources said about 52 per cent of the 98 crore taka project covering 25,226 hectares of area, including 18,776 hectares of cultivable land, had so far been completed.

Of the completed structures 40 per cent were functioning during the current flash floods. The project, started on October 21, 1991, is expected to be completed by June 1997.

During visit to the Tangail chapter of the FAP 20, so many complexities were found among the people over the said 'people-participated' water management project.

Local NGO leader Maloti Prova Dey, who led a massive campaign against the CPP, said farmers knew that work of the FAP had been completed and it would protect their crops from flood.

"For this they cultivated aman paddy this season. But most of their standing crops were washed away by the flood waters. FAP was not

able to do anything for them," she said.

Refuting the allegation Project Director Nurul Alam informed only 15 per cent of project's functioning areas were affected by the flash flood this month for technical reason.

Development Agencies in Tangail President Zakir Hossain said people of outside villages of CPP were suffering due to the FAP 20 covering 40 per cent of Tangail Sadar, 11 per cent of Delduar, 2 per cent of Basail and 0.6 per cent of Kailhati thanas.

It also covers 34 per cent of Sirajganj Sadar, 3.6 per cent of Kazipur, 1 per cent of Raiganj and 0.2 per cent of Kamarkhand thanas in Sirajganj district.

People of Iragota, Kandipara, Bansharia and Pontiar, the outside but adjacent villages of main inlet of the project at Katoa Jogini, apprehended that they could be the worst sufferers following the project.

"This year the main inlet gate was open. But in future when the gate will be closed during onrush of water or heavy rainpour, flood will wash away us," feared Mohammad Ali, a villager outside the project area.

But Nurul Alam also rejected the apprehension, saying they did not construct any new embankment. FAP 20 is totally based on those embankments constructed earlier, he added.

Another NGO member, Rubina Akhtar, alleged that the CPP officials formed chalk committees, water management groups and sub-committee committees, comprising only local elite.

"They distributed water as they wished in the current monsoon," said Jobed Ali, a villager of Khardo Jogini. Two others — Baduzzaman and Abul Kalam Azad — supported him.

They said their activities created artificial flood in several areas, causing damage to standing crops while other places did not get minimum water.

Meanwhile, NGO leader Shamsul Alam alleged that the navigation facilities had totally been disrupted in the area by the CPP.

"Once Karatia was a big river port. But at present people are forced to keep their boats 3 miles off the ghat as so many sluiceways were constructed on riverways," he said.

Two awarded life term for murder in Rangpur

RANGPUR, July 18: Two people were awarded life imprisonment and fine of Tk 5,000 each, in default, to suffer five months more on the charge of murder on Sunday.

According to the prosecution story, the accuseds killed Mahim Uddin, 25, of Satani of Gangachara thana on March 11, 94 over land dispute.

After examining the records and evidences the Additional District and Sessions Judge sentenced Jahur Haque and Afzal Haque.

Students protest load shedding in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, July 18: Several hundred students of the district town on Tuesday brought out a procession demanding regular electricity supply during the study hours in the evening, reports UNB.

The district town has been under load shedding or three hours from 6 pm for the last six months.

The students paraded the main thoroughfares of the town chanting slogan to supply electricity during study-time or quit.

The processionists also met the Deputy Commissioner and Resident Engineer of Electricity and apprised them of their problems.

Mass Education Programme UNESCO's effort in removing illiteracy from rural areas

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, July 18: To ensure the education for all by the year 2000, United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) club Brahmanbaria unit, this year has also introduced Ideal Mass Education Programme (IMEP), which has started to gain the confidence of the people of Kasba thana and Brahmanbaria sadar thana of the district.

In January 1995, UNESCO club Brahmanbaria unit introduced the IMEP under the UNESCO Ideal Mass Education and Rural Resource Development Programme (UIMERRDP) of central UNESCO club.

Of them, 11 mass education centres were established in Brahmanbaria and 13 mass education centres were established in Kasba thana of the district.

There are 30 students and one teacher in each education centre in which a six month long education programme are being conducted. The participants are aged between 6 to 40 years. The education centres have started to exert appreciation from the people of all categories of the selected villages.

UNESCO central committee is supplying all the educational materials and necessary equipment for smooth continuation of the programme.

For educating the illiterate people UNESCO club Brahmanbaria unit has also appointed 24 teachers in the non-formal education centres. The appointed teachers are given proper training to run the centres. A teacher teaches 30 students in each Mass-Education centre. Taka 400 is given to the teachers as monthly salary by the authorities. In each education centre the teacher teaches for one and half an hour daily.

Generally Bengali, English, Arabic and Mathematics are taught in the classes. General knowledge regarding society, economics, health, nutrition etc. are also discussed in the classes.

The number of the interested people and the participants of the IMEP are increasing in the non formal education center under UIMERRDP day by day.

About 720 students of first batch of IMEP educated from 24 mass education centres of UNESCO club Brahmanbaria unit during the first six months of its inception in 1995.

While talking to The Daily Star, Tarikul Islam, district chairman of UNESCO club Brahmanbaria unit explained mass-education programme. He said IMEP has already proved itself as efficient to make people aware about education. A team from Japan comprising two members of UNESCO visited the education centres to assess its performance.

When contacted, the 21 year old Bulet Mia who completed six months long course under UIMERRDP said to the correspondent that in spite of being a day labourer he can sign his name, write letters, do sum and can also read books and papers.

Two killed in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, July 18: Two persons were killed in two separate incidents in Saikupa thana of the district recently.

According to reports, Samir Majumder, 30, of village Laxmipur in Saikupa thana of the district was hacked to death near Bujlia in Saikupa thana of the district while he was returning home from Saikupa bazar at about 9 pm. Samir was immediately rushed to Saikupa thana health complex. He was then referred to Jhenidah sadar thana in critical condition and succumbed to his injuries on next day. The miscreants looted his bicycle and other belongings, it is alleged.

Another report, Saikupa thana police recovered a deadbody of an unknown young woman age about 22 years from village Dhala-Harachandra in Saikupa thana on July 14.

According to police sources the victim might have been killed by using noose with rope after rapping and was left near a bush by the miscreants.

An UD case was lodged with Saikupa thana and the body was sent to morgue for autopsy.



PABNA: A few flood victims who could save their produce — peanuts were seen on an embankment in Haturia-Nakalia. Unfortunately, they could not attract attention of any customer.

Flood situation improves in Faridpur, sufferings mount

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, July 18: The over all flood situation of the district is improving following steady recession of water level in Padma and its tributaries.

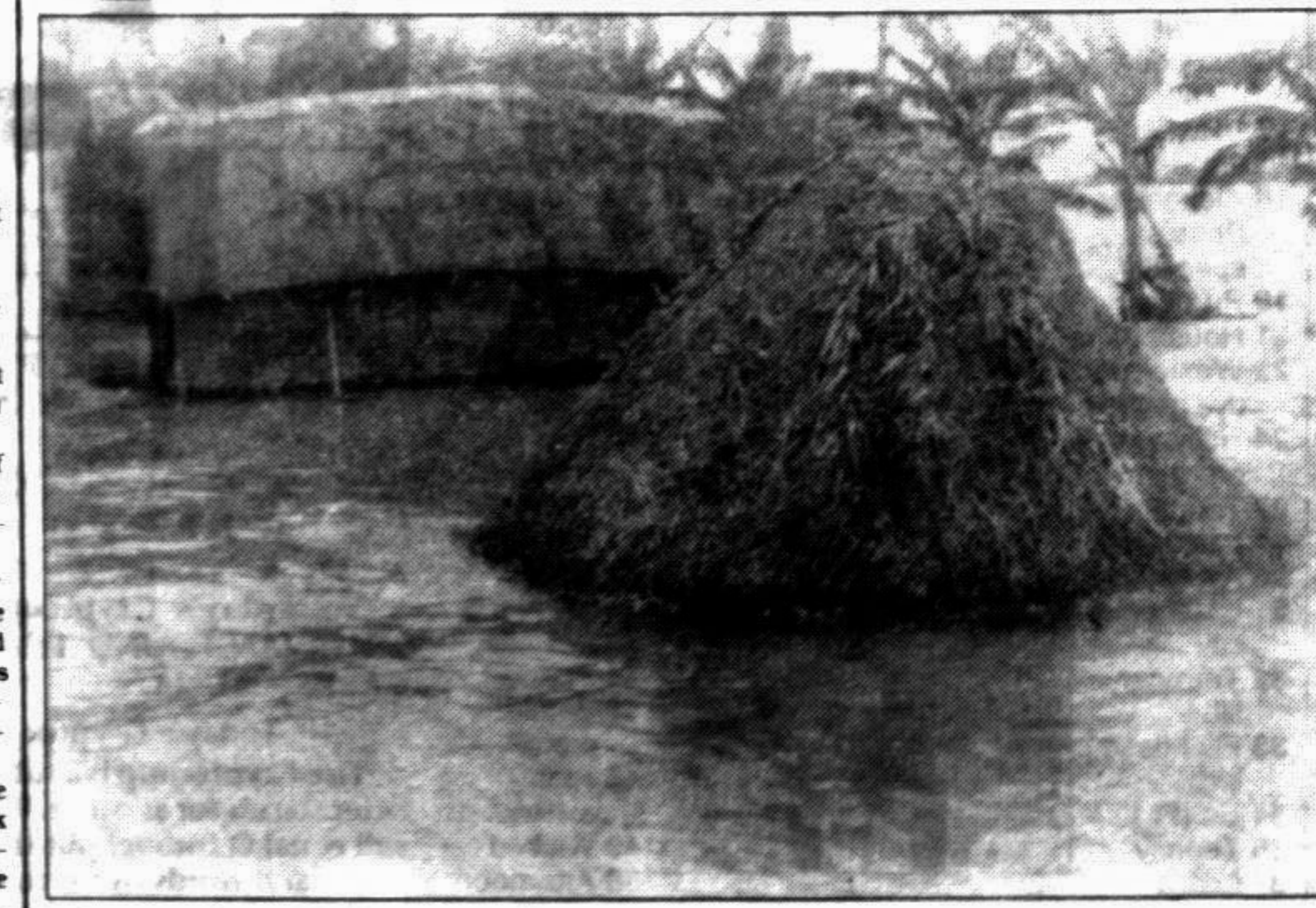
However, suffering of the flood affected people are beyond any description, as most of them are marooned and are facing starvation. The people having lost their homes and belongings have taken shelter on the embankments and other high places.

Sufficient relief materials are yet to reach the affected people, it was learnt from various sources.

Nearly Five hundred marooned families of Char Madhupdia and North Channel unions under Kotwali thana were given 10 pieces of breads and a half kg of gur each.

The ata or flour required for this purpose was supplied by thana administration and the breads were prepared by government primary school teachers of the thana under the supervision of Shiva Prasad Dey, Thana Education Officer.

Three children in Char Madhupdia union under Kotwali thana are reported to have drowned in flood water.



SHERPUR: Stack of straw and dwelling inundated by flood.

ASA launches sanitation project in P'khal, Barguna

July 18: The Association for Social Advancement, ASA has started a large scale sanitation programme at 11 thanas of Patuakhali and Barguna districts under Human Development Programme.

Members of ASA organized groups will have opportunity to establish 24,900 sanitary latrine by taking credit from ASA. A total of 262 sanitary latrines have already been established up to June '95, says a press release.

ASA also has disbursed Tk 16.35 crore among 26 thousand beneficiaries at 11 thanas through 32 Unit Offices under Income Generation Program. The total amount of savings of the beneficiaries of HDP is Tk 1.5 crore.

BAU unit confce of BMS on July 20

MYMENSINGH, July 18: The Seventh triennial conference of the Bangladesh Agricultural University Unit Command of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad (BMS) will be held on July 20, reports UNB.

Vice Chancellor of the University Prof Dr Mohammed Faruq will attend the inaugural function at Shilpacharya Joydul Abedin Auditorium as chief guest.

Freedom Fighter Abdul Kader Siddiki (Bir Uttam) will attend the conference as special guest, said a BAU press release.

Prof Dr Syed Sakhawat Hossain will present the address of welcome and Freedom Fighter Prof Atiar Rahman, Mir Sirajul Islam, Sekandar Ali and Delwar Hossain will also spoke on the occasion.

Speakers protest continued violence in Nature

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, July 18: Speakers at a meeting here urged the police to take immediate steps to recover all illegal firearms and arrest all those known to be involved in criminal activities, and local politicians pledged not to stand bail for any such person.

The meeting, in protest of the continuing violence and terrorism in the district, particularly against businesses, was jointly organised by the Nature Bar Association (NBA) and the Nature Chamber of Commerce and Industries (NCCI) in front of the Nature Press Club Monday afternoon.

The speakers include Abdul Jalil, A D M Aminul Islam, SP Abdul Mannan, President, NCCI, Akram Hossain, President, NBA, Manzurul Hasan, General Secretary of the Press Club, Sirajul Islam, President, BNP, Nature and Shankar Gobinda Chowdhury, President, AL, Nature. It was well attended by prominent businessmen and lawyers of the town and other local leaders of both BNP and AL.

Meanwhile, all shops in the town, except pharmacies, were kept shut for seven hours, beginning 12 noon, in support of the meeting.

Non-formal education programme getting good response

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, July 18: Under the mass education programme of the government, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh (IFB), in 1992, introduced the Mosque-based Integrated Non-formal Education Programme (MINEP) which has now started to draw attention of the people in Brahmanbaria district.

On February 1, 1993 IFB Brahmanbaria district unit introduced the MINEP under the mass education programme in twelve selected areas of Sarail thana of the district.

Later IFB selected six more areas under the said thana for the education programme which has started to exert influence over the people of those areas within a very short time.

According to Deputy Director (DD), Md Abdul Hoque of IFB, Brahmanbaria Office (IFB,BO), 18 non-formal education centres and three non-formal libraries have been set up in the selected areas under Sarail thana of the district.

In order to literate women, IFB has also set up a special non-formal education centre.

Md Abdul Hoque, DD of IFB,BO also said that the classes at the non-formal education centres are divided into two shifts — day shift and night shift. In the day shift one and two years long programmes are being conducted for the children between the age group 4 to 5 years and the age group 6 to 10 years respectively and also including school dropped-out children.

In the night shifts, one year programme are being conducted for boys of the aged group between 11 and 15 years and for the adult of the age group between 15 and above.

IFB,BO is supplying all the educational materials, funds and necessary equipment.

Under this programme, in 1993 and 1994, IFB,BO literated one thousand one hundred forty persons who can now read and write.

In view of, unexpected success IFB,BO awarded three teachers, 60 students and one librarian 'best prize'.

In respect of better result of these education programmes in Brahmanbaria, the number of education centres and the tenure of the programme may be increased, a reliable source informed this correspondent.

It is gathered that the non-formal education centres have appointed 18 'Imams' from the different mosques of Sarail thana of the district. IFB,BO has also appointed a lady teacher for women's education centre.

All the appointed teachers are given training.

Generally, Bangla, Arabic and Mathematics are taught in the classes of these education centres and only the children of age group between 6 and 10 years are facilitated with English subject.

In 1993 — the inception year of the education programme in Sarail, about 540 student — girls, boys men and women were educated through these education centres while 600 were educated in 1994.

This year about 600 participants are attending these education centres. The number of the participants may be increased during the current year.

An official said one can get himself admitted in class three or class four of general primary schools after completing the education courses under MINEP.

IFB,BO has also set up three libraries under this programme at three places under Sarail thana. On an average, about 30 to 35 persons including students of the respective areas attend the libraries every day.

Abdun Noor informed this correspondent that now he can read, do sums and can sign his name.

When contacted Md Sultan Uddin, the Field Supervisor of this programme told this correspondent that in a short time, the people realised the importance of the programme though a few NGOs created obstacles the activities of IFB,BO under MINEP gained momentum with the cooperation of the local people.

He has also informed that they have planned to introduce 50 more education centres under MINEP at Kasba thana of the district. But due to shortage of fund the plan has become uncertain.

While talking to The Daily Star Md Abdul Hoque DD of IFB,BO said that through this programme under MINEP, the socio-economic condition of the 'Imams' have also been elevated.

Pottery products find little room in consumer's world these days

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, July 18: With the gradual extinction of pottery, middle class people have chosen stainless steel and melamine products for their daily household use.

A survey conducted by some local volunteers revealed that 70 per cent middle class people are now using stainless steel plates, glass jugs, and other utensils while 15 per cent use melamine products and the rest are using China clay or ceramic products.

Most of the housewives said stainless steel products are long lasting in spite of its rough use and its glaze remains intact if it is washed regularly, whereas melamine products give rise to various disadvantages which is light weight and do not last long.

Even some upper class housewives gave their opinion against use of Bangladeshi melamine products when they were interviewed by the survey team.

The survey also revealed that the lower income groups are using cheap tin plates instead of using earthen products. About 100 per cent people use aluminium containers for cooking and these save them from recurring expenditures.

Thus potters of this region are being rendered jobless and are forced to engaged in themselves in other occupations leaving their ancestral jobs to maintain their livelihood.

The housewives, according to the survey, also alleged that prices of indigenous melamine products are very high and they prefer stainless steelwares for its comparative low prices.



SYLHET: Khandaker Abdul Malik MP speaking as chief guest at the fourth installation ceremony of the office-bearers of Sylhet Photographic Society (SPS) recently. Mahbubur Rahman Mahboob, outgoing secretary of SPS, Badaruddin Kamran chairman, Sylhet Pourashava and Nazrul Kabir, President of the organization also seen in the picture.

Sad

RAJSHAHI, July 18: Rabby, who finished his SSC exam recently, devoted his life to save his friend Kali, 16. The heart striking incident happened Sunday at about 11 am.

Rabby and Kali, after completion of their SSC examinations from Dinajpur Zilla School, came to Rajshahi to visit their friend, Tapu at Beldarpara four days ago. With another friend, Baten, the four friends, decided to bathe in the Padma river at Panchbali ghat in the city. Suddenly Kali was noticed that he was drowning. Rabby swam to Kali, saved him but he himself was driven away by strong current of the river and drowned. He was recovered after 7 hours at about 5.30 pm.

55,000 children left out of FFE programme

KHULNA, July 18: More than half a lakh poor children of Khulna Division are deprived of primary education for various reasons, reports UNB.

Although the Food for Education Programme has been introduced in the division but they are being deprived of the facility.

It is learnt that 1,527 primary schools and 59 madrasahs have been brought under Food for Education Programme in the division. About 6 lakh poor students of these institutions have been brought under the programme.

But nearly 55,000 poor children are deprived of the facility. Local people alleged that the school committees did not enlist these students as a result of local politics.

Local elite have urged the concerned authorities to look into the matter on humanitarian ground and extend the facility to these poor children.