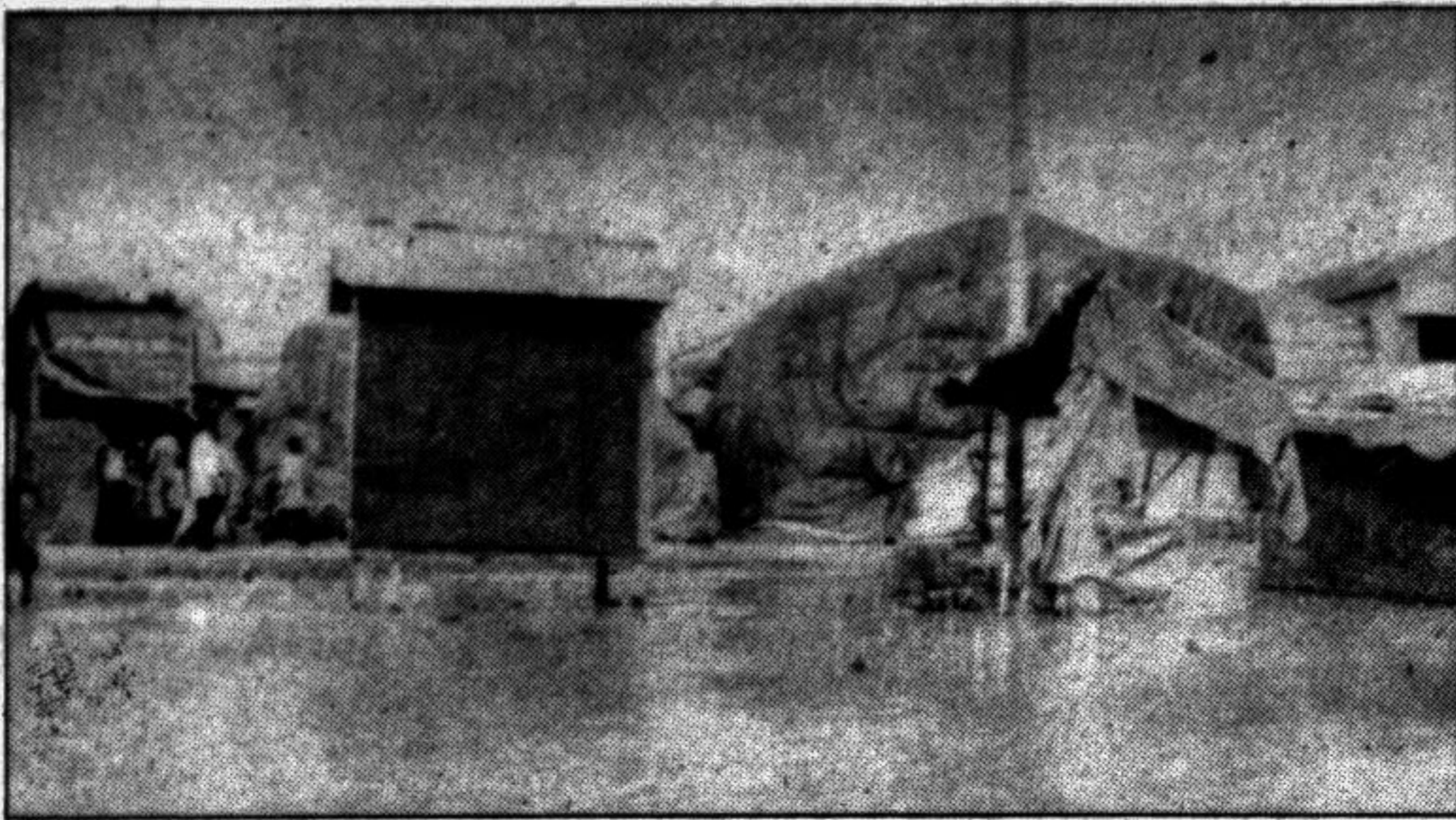


# Flood in N'ganj further worsens

From Ehsanul Haque



Narayanganj: Huge bags of Fertilizer worth about taka one crore is threatened to be washed away by the surge of the flood water on the bank of the river Shitalakkhya at ghat no 5 udner Sadar thana. — Star photo

**Official sources said, standing crops, including Aus, Aman, jute and vegetables on about 12,798 acres of land have been totally damaged and crops on about 12,662 acres were partially damaged. District fisheries department sources said, about 11 hatcheries and about 69 fish-beds worth about Taka 1.53 crore were washed away by flood waters.**



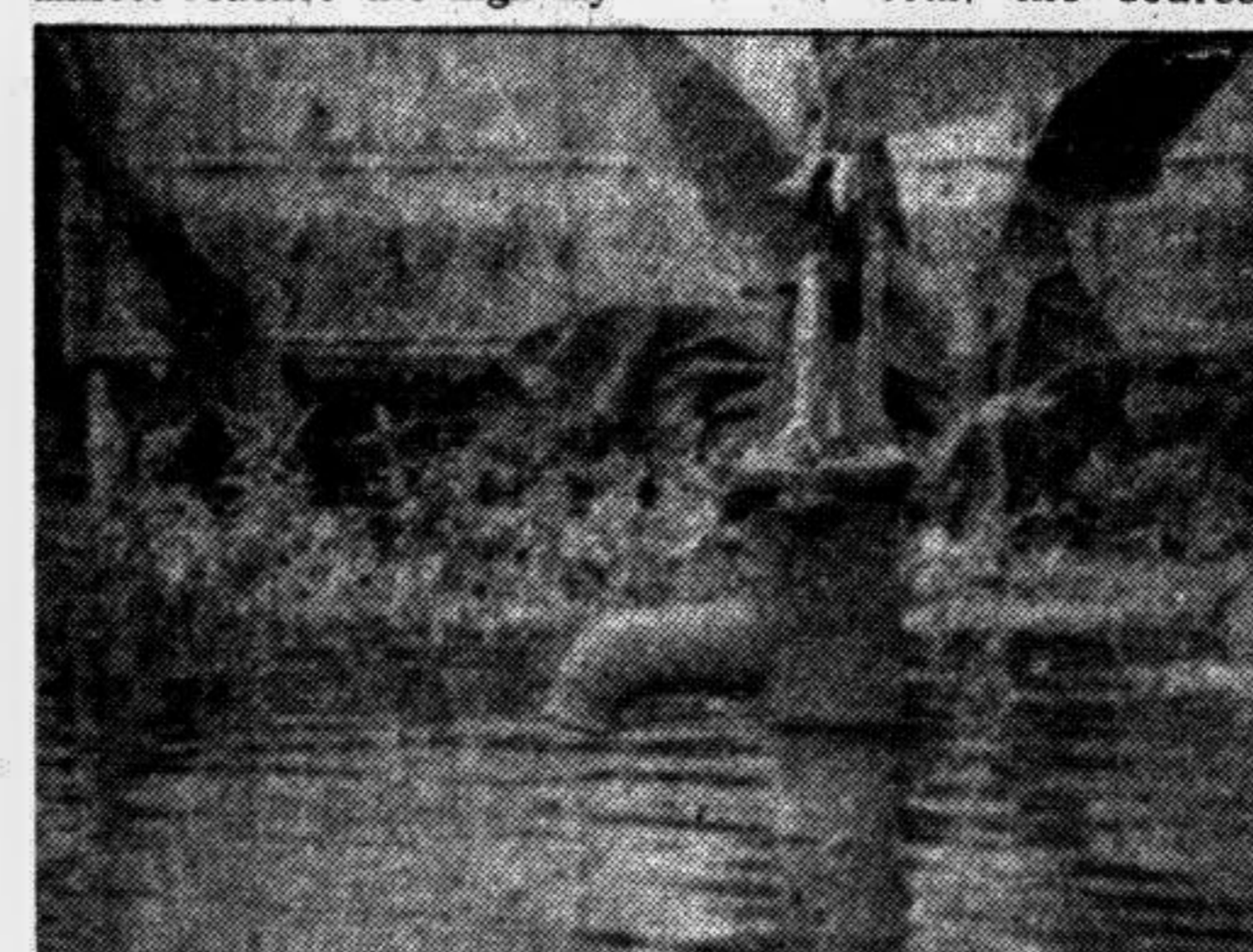
NARAYANGANJ: Some 150 flood-hit families have taken shelter in the Deobag Hazi Uzir Ali High School under sader thana. — Star photo

According to district administration sources, about 50,000 people belonging to 6,000 families of district have been affected. Over 7,000 houses have been fully damaged and 3,725 houses were partially damaged. A total of 17 kilometres of road have gone under water, while 36 kilometres of road have been partially marooned. Flood waters have so far damaged, fully or partially, about 91 educational institutions including 18 high schools and 73 primary schools, 40 bridges and culverts. Official sources said, standing crops, including Aus, Aman, jute and vegetables on about 12,798 acres of land have been totally damaged and crops on about 12,662 acres were partially damaged. District fisheries department sources said, about 11 hatcheries and about 69 fish-beds worth about Taka 1.53 crore were washed away by flood waters. At least 14 people were killed in flood related incidents in different unions in Arahazar, Bandar, Sonargaon, and Siddhirganj thanas during last one week, the concerned thanas informed. Meanwhile, government



NARAYANGANJ: Dhaka-Chittagong highway is under threat of inundation of flood water has almost reached the road. — Star photo by Ehsanul Haque

has sanctioned Taka 50,000 cash, 50 MTs of wheat and 1,000 tins of biscuits as relief for the flood-hit people in Narayanganj district. The Daily Star correspondent, while visiting flood affected areas in five thanas of the district gathered that road links between Dhaka and Chittagong and Narayanganj have been threatened as the rising water level has almost reached the highway



NARAYANGANJ: Acute crisis of drinking water is prevailing in the flood-hit areas as most of the tubewells are inundated by flood water. — Star photo

at Zangalia village under Bandar thana. To protect the Adamjee Jute Mills from flood waters the mills authorities took some steps. The Folk Museum at Sonargaon is under threat as two breaches have developed in Narayanganj-Narsingdi Agrani Irrigation project embankment. Local people stopped



NARAYANGANJ: The premises folk museum at Sonargaon is inundated by flood waters. — Star photo

leakage of water through the breaches by putting sandbags. They alleged that no other steps were taken as yet. Local people have organised 10 flood shelters where about 10,000 people have taken shelter. But there was no supply of government relief in these shelters. Acute shortage of drinking water is prevailing in the affected areas as most of the tubewells are marooned.

With the swelling of river Meghna, the Baiddarbazar launch ghat in Sonargaon thana was washed away and the bazar areas are inundated. About 32,000 tons of imported coal at Aliganj Coal Depot No. 2 is under threat of being washed away by the surge of the flood water on the bank of the river. Buriganga at Aliganj point under Fatullah thana. According to Aliganj Coal Depot sources, of the 32,000 tons of coal, 24,000 tons belong to the Ministry of Commerce and the rest 9,000 tons are owned by the private traders. The source said the coal stacked on the river bank is being swallowed by violent current of flood water.

The local coal office and the Ansar barracks have been submerged by flood water. As a result 30 Ansar guards with their arms and ammunition have taken shelter under the open sky on the top of the stacked coal, the source

# Flood in Chalan Beel area may turn more destructive

From M A Ali Himu



NATORE: Flood waters inundated many dwellings in the area surrounding the Chalan Beel. — Star photo

NATORE, July 21: Chalan Beel, the vast beel of the country is now in the grip of flood. About 10 lakh people are inundated. Fresh areas are being inundated in eight thanas of Chalan Beel almost everyday as the water level of the beel is continuing to rise alarmingly, it was gathered while this correspondent had been visiting the beel areas last Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The water level has increased by 50 cm during the three days at different points of the beel that consists Baragram, Gurudaspur and Shingra thanas of Natore district, Vangura and Chatmohor thanas of Pabna and Tarash, Royganj and Ullapara thanas of Sirajganj districts, water development board authority said.

Gushing water entering through Atrai, Karotoa, Gumani, Nandakuja, Baral and Gur rivers have inundated the low-lying areas of the beel. More than seven lakh people of one thousand villages of 40 unions under the eight thanas are marooned. Crops on about four lakh acres of land in the 2130 square kms areas of Chalan Beel have gone under water.

While visiting the areas, this correspondent saw that high waves like that of an ocean drowned a paddy loaded boat. In the arable land of the beel where shallow tubewells were set up.

The area is now under 9 to 10 feet deep water. The waves are 2 to 3 feet high. Water Development Board (WDB) sources informed that flood water is entering the beel fast, as the Sarbari and Nurula embankments on the banks of river Atrai at Mandha thana of Naogaon and several embankments-cum-road have developed breaches, during first week of July and also few sluice gates have been remain ineffective for long time.

Ahammad Ali of Bilsha village told The Daily Star that he had noticed the veranda of his house keeping out of touch of flood waters before going to bed on Thursday night. But waking up next morning he saw his veranda and some portion of his house submerged in flood waters.

Thus the incoming flood water is continuing to submerge homesteads and croplands of the beel area.

Most of the people of this region are agri-based and the farmers and day labourers have no work, nor they have any food-stock in their houses.

According to a report, during the last century, flood occurred in Chalan Beel areas about 14 times. Among the 14 floods most devastating one was in 1988. But due



NATORE: Bilsha Bazar of Gurudaspur thana is now under threat of being washed away at any time by the turbulent waters of Chalan Beel. — Star photo by M A Ali Himu

to heavy rainfall and increasing rise in water level, the flood situation may turn even more devastating this year. When contacted, Azir Uddin Ahmed, DC Natore after returning from Chalan Beel told that he has not yet been briefed about the flood of the beel. District relief and rehabilitation officer told this correspondent that about one

thousand houses were submerged, at Shingra thana. Hanif Mohammad, TNO of Gurudaspur told that the union parishads to inform about the damages. However, it is reported, at least five persons including two at Ullapara and one in Pipla of Gurudaspur thana died in boat capsizing and other flood related incidents.



NATORE: The surrounding lands of Chalan Beel is under threat of inundation. — Star photo by M A Ali Himu

# Malaria, diarrhoea reaching epidemic proportions in CHT

From A K M Zahoarul Huq

**No special allocation of fund towards prevention of malaria is made in the annual allocation though Bandarban district is officially treated as 'malaria high risk area,' a source from the District Civil Surgeon office alleged, adding that the constraints of fund make it impossible to contain malaria. The stock of saline and quinine dihydrochloride tablets in the sadar hospital at present is zero, the source further alleged on July 17. The Civil Surgeon (In-charge) of Bandarban said, the programme of rendering medicare services has been facing a serious set-back due to shortage of physicians; out of 68 posts of physicians, 37 are lying vacant. Malarial parasite was found positive in the blood test of 30 thousand more patients, tested in the hospital and health complexes of the district, he added.**

ment Council said, adding that in addition to the medical team under supervision of the Civil Surgeon, a medical team from Kaptai BDR Zone has been working. Malaria has been claiming 3 to 4 lives a day in Bandarban hill district. Lama, Alikadam and Thanchi thanas of the district have been experiencing the massive onslaught of malaria. It claimed at least 120 lives from June 24 to July 18, this year of which 38 deaths were officially recorded. Including death of 21 in thana health complex, 46 people reportedly died in Lama thana alone. The malaria patients exceeded 90 per cent of the total inmates in Bandarban sadar hospital, where 16 died in the last week, hospital sources informed The Daily Star. The alarming figure of death has developed a panic among the people and local leaders. Four hundred people

reportedly died last year in the month of May, June, July and August — the period treated as malaria risk season. No special allocation of fund towards prevention of malaria is made in the annual allocation though Bandarban district is officially treated as 'malaria high risk area,' a source from the District Civil Surgeon office alleged, adding that the constraints of fund make it impossible to contain malaria. The stock of saline and quinine dihydrochloride tablets in the sadar hospital at present is zero, the source further alleged on July 17. The Civil Surgeon (In-charge) of Bandarban said, the programme of rendering medicare services has been facing a serious set-back due to shortage of physicians; out of 68 posts of physicians, 37 are lying vacant. Malarial parasite was found positive in the blood test of 30 thousand more pa-

tients, tested in the hospital and health complexes of the district, he added. In a press conference in Bandarban on Tuesday, Bir Bahadur, MP, urged the government to take immediate steps to contain malaria. He narrated the shocking state of onslaught of malaria to the journalists present at the conference.

About two to three patients have been dying of malaria and diarrhoea every day in the thana health complex of inaccessible Thanchi thana, 109 kilometres from the district headquarters, almost unattended as the only medical officer, Dr Mutahar Hossain had left the hospital on July 2 unauthorisedly, it was alleged. The two medical assistants, the substitutes of the doctors, normally suspend their work at 1.00 pm every day and engage themselves in some other private work, depriving treatment seekers even from their minimum requirement the allegation added. During the period of Dr Mutahar's deputation in Balpara BDR Zone, at least 80 people died of diarrhoea and malaria from May to June 20, 1995 without treatment. It was learnt.

Malaria has so far claimed 35 people from June 24 to July 18, this year in the different places of Khagrachhari hill district and attacked over 20 thousand, concerned sources added. People of the severe malaria-prone areas have been taking refuge in the comparatively safer places though the entire district is hard-hit by malaria and diarrhoea. People of the less-hit areas have been avoiding the influx of shelter-seekers apprehending attack of the diseases. Thirty-five physicians have been working in the place of 85, compelling the patients to approach the quacks, sources alleged.

Government medicare supplies are stolen by the medicare professionals for selling those to the patients, it was grossly alleged.

RANGAMATI, July 21: Malaria and diarrhoea have taken an alarming turn claiming 160 lives in between June 24 and July 18 in Chittagong Hill Tracts. Fifty-three deaths from malaria and 11 from diarrhoea were recorded officially with the concerned authorities.

The figure includes an army officer, Lt. Arif, 21, who was posted in a camp at an inaccessible area of Khagrachhari hill district and Alok Prasad Gurkha, 25, a Juba League leader of Rangamati. Malaria also claimed 20 troops since January 1995, official sources said.

According to reports available with the different administrations, local leaders and social workers, malarial and diarrhoeal death toll stand at 785 from January 1995 to July 18, 1995 in CHT region. More than 1.25 lakh people suffered from the diseases, the reports added.

Within 72 hours from July 15, diarrhoea claimed lives of 20 tanchangya tribesmen in Kaptai thana under Rangamati Hill District.

More than 200 tribals have been suffering from diarrhoea in Kukinara, Tambupara and Waggachara villages, said Anil Chandra Tanchangya, Chairman of Chandraghona UP, who distributed saline worth over Taka three thousand among the diarrhoeal attacked people before medical teams reached the diarrhoea-prone areas.

Parizat Kushum Chakma, Chairman of the local Government Council of Rangamati hill district, when contacted told The Daily Star on July 18 that immediately on hearing of breaking out of diarrhoea, he has directed the Civil Surgeon of Rangamati hill district, Dr Supriya Barua to rush to the affected area with necessary men and materials. Parizat further directed the Civil Surgeon to take punitive action against the responsible health assistant for his failure to inform the proper authority for the breaking out of diarrhoea in time. The onslaught of diarrhoea has already been contained in the affected areas, chairman of the Local Govern-