

Flood hits Rajshahi

11 out of 13 thanas affected as six major rivers swell

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Aug 23: Flash floods submerged a vast area in Rajshahi in last one week. Heavy rainfall and onrush of water from the upstreams of the river Padma, Barana, Baral, Fakir, Shiva and Rani made the rivers to swell. All the rivers have crossed their danger levels and flooded the surrounding areas.

Rajshahi was well known as the land of no flood. Only some low lands were submerged by rain water in the past. But due to unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water at Farakkha by India, the bed of the river Padma has raised up, even above the banks at some points. That is why the river cannot hold the onrush of water from the upstreams in the rainy season and floods now affect a vast area.

Floods this time submerged most of the thanas of the district. Godagari, Tanore, Boalia, Rajpara, Mathiar, Paba, Charghat, Bagha, Puthia, Bagmara and Mohanpur. Only Shah Makhdum and Durgapur thanas were spared. The Padma started to swell since early this month and crossed the danger mark at Rajshahi on August 16. It was flowing above the danger level up to August 20 and then started to fall. At the same time the Barana also continued to swell till August 21.

Char Kana, Char Ashariadaha, Char Hemantanagar and Kodalkathi. Char of Godagari thana went under water and about 30 thousands of people were marooned. Twenty-four villages of Godagari, Basudevur and Gogram unions were also submerged. The Padma eroded more than 61 houses in Nimitala village of Gogram union and Madarpur and Sarangpur villages of Godagari unions.

About 120 square km area of Tanore, Mohanpur and Bagmara thanas went under water and standing crops including ripen transplanted aus paddy worth about Tk 15 crore were damaged when some miscreants cut a dam along side the Shiva river at Tengrghat in Manda thana of Naogaon district.

About 20 thousand acres of lands were submerged along with standing crops when a dam was broken at Mailerdara in the village Laopara in Ganipur union of Bagmara thana. Fish of more than 100 ponds were washed away. In the worst affected Bagmara thana, all 16 unions were submerged, among which Naradas, Govindapara, Auspara, Dipur Basupara, Bara Bihalmi, Jugipara, Jhikra, Gokandi, Shripur and Sonadanga unions were worst hit. Crops of about 50,000 acres of lands, fish of about 3,000 ponds and 200 houses were damaged in these 10 unions.

Meanwhile, some low 82 lakh saline bags distributed in Rajshahi Div.

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Aug 23: The oral saline production and distribution project has distributed over 82 lakh packets of oral saline in 16 districts under Rajshahi Division during the last fiscal year.

Established in 1980 and funded by UNICEF, the project is meeting a bulk of the requirement of oral saline of general masses of the region with its production of around 30,000 packets daily.

Due to its effectiveness comparing to other oral saline, general people preferred to collect it from the hospitals and rural health centres at free of cost.

lands of the City Corporation area and the slums and the villages alongside the south of the Town Protection Dam went under water.

According to the District Relief Office sources, 65 metric tons of wheat and Tk 65,000 was allocated for the

flood affected people of the district. The amount is too little to meet the demand. The relief too, did not reach the people till August 22, it is learnt. The sources said that it would take at least a week to assess the amount of damage and enlist the relief

receivers. No minister or MP have visited the flood affected areas yet.

Meanwhile, diarrhoea and other viral diseases have broken out in the flood affected areas but no medical teams was formed yet it is alleged.



RAJSHAHI: Dargahpara village in the city corporation area went under flood water recently — Star photo



RAJSHAHI: People harvesting ripen aus paddy submerged by flood water. The photo was taken from Kamargaon of Tanore thana on Aug 20. — Star photo

20 pc people of Jhenidah suffer from tuberculosis

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, Aug 23: About 2,50,000 people have been suffering from tuberculosis and at least 1,700 people have been suffering from leprosy in Jhenidah district, it was learnt.

According to district Civil Surgeon office sources, the population of Jhenidah district is more than 13 lakh. To control tuberculosis and leprosy, government has started a campaign all over the country and has engaged the workers of Health Department to detect the patients from each and every house.

Sources said, TB and leprosy control programme has started in five out of six thanas of the district since June this year. Till July 18, some 584 suspected TB patients were examined and out of them 150 were detected

as pulmonary tuberculosis (PTB). Of them 51 PTB patients are carrying positive germs who have been spreading the disease among healthy persons.

Sources informed five leprosy affected patients were also detected so far from the all five thana health complexes and one of them has already died, it was learnt. Three patients were detected from Saikupa thana, and one each from Kothandpur and Harinakundu thana. A leprosy affected patient affects at least 12 normal people, said Dr Manjurul Islam. TB and leprosy designated Medical Officer (MO), Dr Seikh Aminul Haq and Dr Sunil Kumar Biswas both in-charge of the unit informed that at least 20 per cent people of the district

are affected with TB and at least 1,700 people were affected with leprosy.

The physicians told that the number of TB patients are on increase. They further informed that though TB and leprosy both are deadly diseases, these can be cured with regular treatment. They also informed that all types of drugs like Rifampicin, Isoniazide are being supplied among the patients under direct supervision of concerned authorities so that the patients can use the drugs regularly.

The medical officers further informed that most of the TB and leprosy affected patients do not disclose their diseases for shame. To remove this mentality the people must be made aware.



JHENIDAH: Some leprosy patients waiting for their turn in a thana health complex of the district — Star photo

Md Meherullah

A proposal was submitted to the concerned ministry for setting up of a BWDB divisional office at Jamalpur to make the implementation work easier. In this connection an official file was opened at BWDB head office at the directive of the late president Ziaur Rahman. However, nothing was done to revive the project.

Another proposal was forwarded by then Deputy Commissioner of Jamalpur to the BWDB head office on December 23 in 1983 regarding the project work. The response was not wide at all. The late president Ziaur Rahman formally inaugurated the work on the Brahmaputra Barrage, an internal part of the project near Dewanganj thana town in 1980.

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Taka 13 crore was sanctioned for flood control embankment along Dowsari river. Taka two crore 77 lakh for Madarganj thana head-quarter protection project,

Taka one crore 50 lakh for Pullahkandi union protection embankment under Dewanganj thana. Taka two crore 54 lakh for Dewanganj thana town protection and rehabilitation project. Taka one crore 25 lakh for construction of regulator at Kurnajura river under Srebordi thana. Taka one crore 40 lakh for Rowbakhari rehabilitation projects. Taka 60 lakh for Nalitabari-Voliakandi canal digging and water supply project. Taka one crore 20 lakh for construction work of flood control embankment along the river Bhugal under Nalitabari thana.

Taka 12 crore was also approved for Ranjan Majili control embankment project under Jhenagati thana. Taka

Caught in action

From CHT Correspondent

RANGAMATI, Aug 23: Rangamati Kotwali police has rounded up three extortionists from a local residential hotel at Bonarupa allegedly for extortion of tolls from an employee of the hotel recently, police sources said.

The alleged extortionists arrested were — Ribart Chakma, Dipankar Dewan (Asim) and Prayan Khisha of Debashishnagar of Rangamati town.

A group of five to six extortionists checked in Alif Boarding at Bonarupa of the town and tried to collect tolls from an employee of the boarding. The Kotwali police rushed to the spot and rounded up them on information of boarding management.

One dies from snake bite

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Aug 23: One Jainal Ali, 40, of village Dhuldi under sadar thana died from snake-bite on August 17.

It is reported that a poisonous snake bite him when he was sleeping in his bedroom. Jainal Ali died soon after the snake-bite.

Housewife commits suicide

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Aug 23: A house wife allegedly committed suicide on Friday.

It is reported that Ayesha Khatun, 30, wife of Nazimuddin at village Bilmamudpur under sadar thana committed suicide by taking Endrine due to family quarrel.

The victim when became senseless after taking Endrine on the day of occurrence was rushed of Faridpur General Hospital.

Young boy drowns

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Aug 23: A boy drowned in a pond at Kamalapur in the town on August 18.

It is reported that Raju, 6, son of Sheikh Shafi Kamalapur while driving away ducks suddenly fell into the pond water and drowned.

After searching his body was recovered and rushed to Faridpur General Hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead.

One killed as 2 boats collide

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 23: A middle-aged man was killed when a country boat collided with an engine-boat in sadar thana of the district on Monday night, reports UNB.

According to the witnesses, the mishap occurred when the boat carrying Sohrah Ali, 40, and three others collided with an engine boat coming from opposite direction in the flood water at village Shaikabari of the thana at 9 pm. Sohrah died on the spot.

The body was sent to the General Hospital for post-mortem. The injured were rushed to the hospital.

A case was filed with the police.

Housewife violated

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Aug 23: A housewife named Taslima Begum, (26) of village Vati Khalkula under Jamalpur union in Rajbari district was recently violated.

It is reported when Taslima was grazing her cow near the house. Abdur Razzaque son of Nazandee Khan of neighbouring village. Betenga forcibly took her into a sugarcane field and raped her.

A case was lodged with Rajbari magistrate court in this connection.

Shortage of fund, fishing materials hit pisciculture in Cox's Bazar

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Aug 23: Thousands of fishermen of the Cox's Bazar district have been facing manifold problems in carrying on their ancestral profession due to shortage of funds and scarcity of fishing materials.

According to a statistics, about 45,000 fishermen of Moheshkhali, Kutubdia, Teknaf, Chakoria, Ukhiya and Cox's Bazar sadar thanas are engaged in the age-old profession.

Some of them said sudden price hike of nets, boats and other necessary equipment and exploitation by non-professional fishermen have thrown them in a crisis.

Pisciculture in the six thanas has been largely affected due to drying up of the water bodies. Siltation of the rivers and ponds are worsening the condition of fish cultivation and production in the region. Siltation of the Bakkhali river and Matamuhuri river have largely affected the pisciculture in the district.

Disposal of wastes of mills and factories in the rivers is the main reason of water pollution and siltation of the rivers, it is learnt.

Local fishermen said they are passing their days in extreme hardship due to shortage of capital. In the absence of adequate loan facilities from the commercial banks, they are forced to borrow money from the money lenders with a high rate of interest.

They told this correspondent that the bank loans sanctioned for the fishermen are quite inadequate and most of the real fishermen cannot get the loan. Local fisheries department has failed to take proper measures for solving the problems of the fishermen. It is alleged.

They alleged that some lease holders in collusion with the local vested groups are giving sub-lease to the fake fishermen. Moreover, genuine fishermen cannot catch fish normally even after getting leases in most cases. Fish cultivation in the district has been facing setback due to lack of proper maintenance of rivers, canals and ponds. Sources said hundreds of ponds have turned derelict due to lack of care for the last 10 to 15 years.

Many others are full of water-lycians.

Local leaders urged the authorities to take a comprehensive scheme for cooperative fish farming using the sweet water bodies of the district.

On the other hand, fish supply has drastically fallen in Cox's Bazar, a wholesale fish market of the district, for a considerable period.

Sea fish and various other local varieties of fish are generally brought and sold in the bazar, an important centre of the southern region. Traders from various parts of the country have their local agents here to purchase and supply fish to their desired locations.

But according to local traders, due to increased activities of the pirates in the Bay of Bengal and its adjoining areas, fishing in the Bay has been facing a serious setback, resulting in a huge shortage of fish in the markets.

Traders urged the authorities to ensure security of the fishermen in the Bay and spray lime water in the follow water-bodies immediately.

Dutch ambassador visits ASA's project

GAZIPUR, Aug 23: Anton RM Scuty, Charge D Affairs of the Netherlands visited ASA's Programme at Board Bazar under the district of Gazipur on Monday. He visited a Unit Office and a landless women's group Kunia Pachar ASA landless women's group. He praised about the organizations programme and expressed his will for further visits, says a press release.

He was accompanied by Md Shafiqul Haque Choudhury Chief-Executive of ASA and Assistant Co-ordinator Khandaiker Md Shahidul Alam.



GAZIPUR: Chief-Executive of ASA, Md Shafiqul Haque Choudhury (middle) talking to Charge D Affairs of the Netherlands Anton RM Scuty at ASA's programme office at Board Bazar. — Star photo

BRDB gives Tk 2 crore loan in Magura, Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

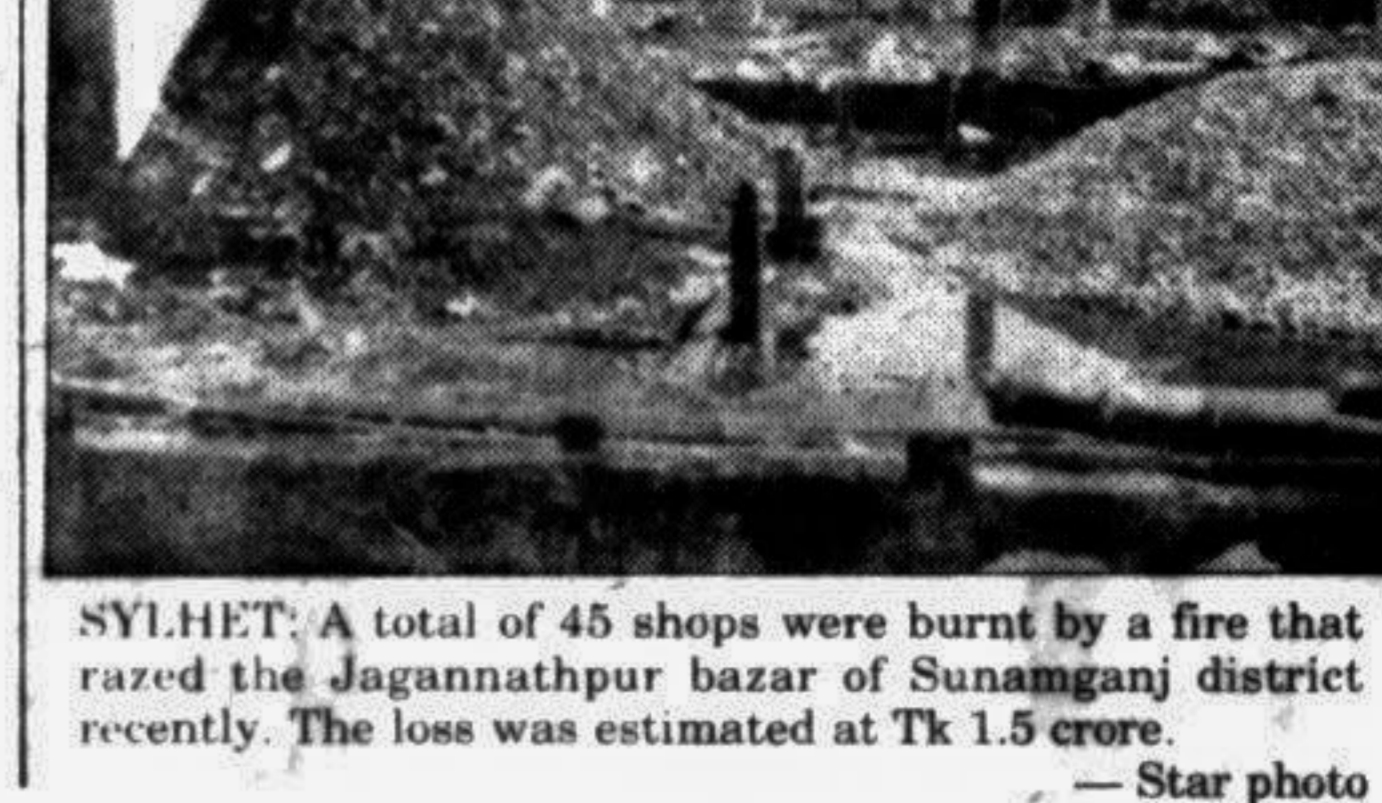
JHENIDAH, Aug 23: Rural Development Board (BRDB) has disbursed Taka 2,09,07,000 in Jhenidah and Magura districts in last fiscal year, it was learnt.

According to sources, BRDB had taken programmes for the overall development of socio-economic condition of the poor and landless people of Jhenidah sadar, Kaliganj, Kotchardpur, Mohespur, Harinakundu and Saikupa thanas of Jhenidah district and Magura sadar. Salikha, Sreepur and Mohamudpur thanas of Magura district under Rural Poor Co-operative Project (RPCP) among 8,084 members of 471 societies namely Bittabin Samabaya Samity (BSS) and Mahila Bittabin Samabaya Samity (MBSS) out of total 14,951 members of 691 societies in ten thanas of the two districts, sources said.

BRDB sources also informed that Taka 11 lakh was deposited as share while Taka 32,000 was collected as savings from the society members in last fiscal year. It was also gathered that the figure of loan was Taka 1,13,01,000 as dues and the recovery rate was hundred per cent.

According to sources, BRDB authorities usually disburse loans against small business, paddy husking, milching, soft chicken rearing, beef fattening, betelleaf farming, cane and bamboo works, small mechanism and other cottage industries. BRDB authorities have so far distributed 70,000 saplings, constructed 16 Commanding Area Development (CAD), arranged sanitation facilities for 916 families.

To implement the programmes properly, 5,627 persons were given training as co-operative leaders, managers or book keepers.



SYLHET: A total of 45 shops were burnt by a fire that razed the Jagannathpur bazar of Sunamganj district recently. The loss was estimated at Tk 1.5 crore. — Star photo

Rape victim appeals for security of life

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Aug 23: Jharna Katoun, 14, daughter of Shukur Ali, a day-labourer of village Matigachha under Athgharia thana, became a helpless target of several armed mastaans of the locality following her refusal to marry one of them.

Jharna, along with the members of her family, came to Pabna, met the local journalists in the local Press Club and narrated her miseries.

The story, as narrated by them is that, Apai Mollah, an old man of the same village, proposed to marry Jharna, but she and her guardians turned down the proposal. Following this, on the night of April 26, 1993, Apai Mollah and several other miscreants — all armed — broke open the door of their bedroom, kidnapped Jharna, took her away forcibly in a nearby field and raped her. She and her parents raised hue and cry, and as the villagers forward the criminals fled.

Father Shukur Ali lodged a case against them.

Now, Jharna and all members of her family are under threat. The criminals are all moving around and the local people are also afraid of them and none dares open mouth against them.

Earlier in another incident the same gang upon their threat and intimidation, forced to withdraw a case lodged against them.

However the case lodged by Jharna's father is still under trial. Criminals want its withdrawal.

Project to save Jamalpur, Sherpur from flood still awaits implementation

JAMALPUR, Aug 23: The flood control and irrigation project undertaken about 25 years ago still awaits implementation.

The 93 crore Taka project was planned to control flood, explore irrigation facilities in Jamalpur and Sherpur districts. The Bangladesh Water Development Board took the task of implementing the project with World Bank aid.

It is learnt that B M A Abbas, an expert on flood, irrigation and erosion lead a team of experts who conducted a survey to select the project site in 1978. Unfortunately, the site, selected for project work, was illegally occupied and in due course the occupants' settlement grew large and larger who were ultimately difficult to evict.

A reliable source said that

a proposal was submitted to the concerned ministry for setting up of a BWDB divisional office at Jamalpur to make the implementation work easier. In this connection an official file was opened at BWDB head office at the directive of the late president Ziaur Rahman. However, nothing was done to revive the project.

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one crore 25 lakh for regulator and a bridge construction project along the river Mregi under Sherpur thana.

Taka one crore 26 lakh for the construction of a regulator come bridge and canal digging project under the Sarishabari thana was also sanctioned along with the two crore 14 lakh for the construction of 77 km long flood control embankment along the Dilakandi river in Nalitabari thana.

Under the Food for Works Programme 43,486 metric tons of wheat were sanctioned for the construction of Brahmaputra flood control embankment (Bahiwarchar to Duharchar).

Twenty thousand mt of wheat for the excavation at Banner and Sashakhi canals

under Jamalpur thana. 30,000 mt of wheat sanctioned for dredging Mregi river. 170,000 maunds of wheat for the construction of embankment along the river Chill Akhali in Sherpur sadar thana.

A reliable source of the BWDB said that the embankment constructed under the project have been threatened by the Brahmaputra erosion. During the last 25 years about 6000 square feet of area were devoured by the rivers causing huge losses to the government.

The sources added owing to non-completion of project, erosion and flood continue to threaten Jamalpur and Sherpur districts every year.

tion of the embankment near the Brahmaputra to curb erosion but the measurers taken so far have failed.

An official of the BWDB said since 1967 the Brahmaputra river has been eroding Dewanganj thana town engulfing an area of more than three miles in length and one mile deep inside.

In last 25 years about five lakh people were rendered homeless in the district. Several thousand people have gone to other districts for food and shelter.

Recently a cross section of people in Dewanganj thana town demanded immediate implementation of Brahmaputra Barrage to save their properties. They also handed over a memorandum to the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Road link with Dhaka under threat of erosion

SAVAR, Aug 23: Road link between the capital and the northern and southern parts of the country may be snapped any time if adequate measures are not taken immediately to stop the erosion of some portions of the Dhaka-Aricha highway, reports UNB.

Local people said the two kilometres area of the highway from Baliapur to Amin-bazar are under serious threat as continuous wave caused by wind have been eroding its slope. The water level on both sides of the road has risen sharply following heavy downpour and onrush of flood water. Cracks and landslides have also developed on that portion of the road seriously hampering the movement of vehicles.