

Mother to die for killing daughter

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Sept 9: The Additional Sessions Judge of Rangpur in a sensational murder case has awarded death sentence to an assailant mother for killing her minor child recently.

On September 4 Bilkis Ara Begum, a divorced woman of Birampur thana under Dinajpur district murdered her two-year old daughter, Farzana Boby, when she came to Rangpur town with her daughter. She then extracted her both eyes and kidney. The neighbours caught her in the act and later handed her to the police. She confessed her guilt and disclosed that she would sell the child's organs to earn money for livelihood.

Saumendra Sarker, Additional Sessions Judge examined 11 prosecution witnesses and after hearing both sides, found the accused Bilkis Begum guilty and convicted her accordingly and awarding death sentence terming it as a brutal offence which should not go amid mild punishment.

Dispute over fishing claims one's life

BRAHMANBARIA, Sept 9: A man has been killed following a dispute over fishing in a beel in Banchharampur thana of the district, reports UNB.

Villagers said a group of about 15 people swooped on Dulal Miah, 28 while he was fishing nearby his house at Charchayane village and killed him with deadly weapons last week. He died on the spot.

Huge closed water bodies in N-dists remain unused

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Sept 9: A little less than two-third of the total amount of closed waterbodies are not used for pisciculture in 16 northern districts of the country for various reasons. As a result fish production cannot be improved upto the expectation in these areas.

Official sources here said, there are a total of 41,399 hectares of closed waterbodies in 16 districts of Rajshahi Division. But only 15,807 hectares of waterbodies have been brought under planned fish cultivation programme till 1994-95 fiscal year. Out of the rest, 9,610 hectares are fallow waterbodies and 15,982 hectares have all the facilities of pisciculture.

These include ponds, dighis and ditches of both public and private ownership. These closed waterbodies are of two types- perennial or permanent ponds and seasonal or temporary ponds. The perennial ponds reserve water all year long, while the seasonal waterbodies normally contain water only for a few months especially in the rainy seasons from the Bangla month of Ashar (April to May) to Kartik (September to October).

Lack of consciousness of the people about the methods and prospects of pisciculture, joint ownership and disputes over ownership of ponds, shortage of funds, lack of technical knowledge, drying up of the ponds or scarcity of a minimum amount of water necessary for fish cultivation, hatred attitude to the profession of fish-farming etc have been identified as the major causes behind non-cultivation of such a huge amount of water

bodies in the division. Justifying the above reasons, people added that the Directorate of Fisheries is specially interested in pisciculture in open waterbodies like large beels and flood-plains than doing it in closed ponds.

To explain the matter, Directorate of Fisheries asserted that open water

Department is more involved with the open bodies, the source said.

Senior Assistant Director, Directorate of Fisheries, Rajshahi Division, Golam Azam Khan informed that there were three ongoing programmes to extend pisciculture in closed waterbodies in rural areas of the division.

revised and renamed in 1994 as "Project of strengthening of fisheries extension in rural ponds". The programme was launched in 55 thanas of 16 districts of Rajshahi Division, other thanas will be brought out under the project very soon.

The programme of the "Second Fisheries Develop-

ment, farmers are given training on modern technology free of cost and after completion of the training they are granted interest-free loans.

North-west Fisheries Extension Project, Parbatipur is being run in the districts of Dinajpur, Kurigram, Thakurgaon, Rangpur and

closed waterbodies as it requires less amount of fund and scope of malpractice is very limited.

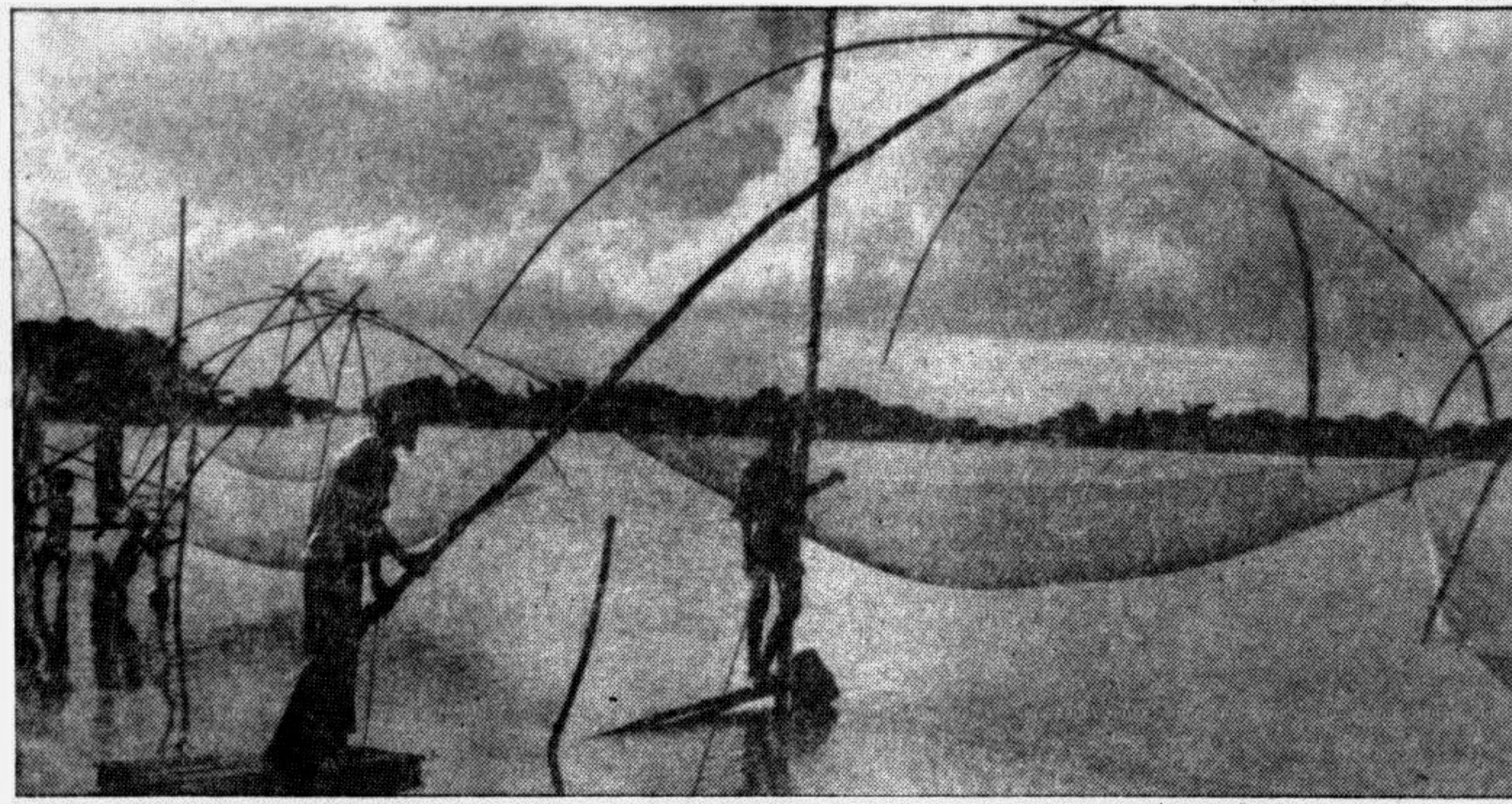
Another cause behind it is that the donor agencies are also interested with the large open water bodies of long-term big investments.

Whatever it may be, due to lying of 25,592 hectares of waterlands uncultivated, individuals and groups of people are being deprived of at least 20,000 metric tons of fish every year.

According to official sources, a total of 47,815 metric tons of fish was yielded in 1992-93 fiscal year from the closed water bodies of Rajshahi division. Out of the total, 29,100 metric tons of fish was obtained from 15,807 hectares of ponds cultivated in planned manners and 18,715 metric tons of fish was yielded naturally from 25,592 hectares of fallow waterlands.

According to the joint survey report of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Directorate of Fisheries and UNDP, there are 2,97,897 ponds and small ditches and 13,921 dighis and beels in Rajshahi Division. If all these closed waterbodies can be brought under planned fish-cultivation programme, lakhs of people will be directly benefited in forms of employment, business and protein nourishment.

It may also be mentioned here that only 21 per cent of total closed waterbodies of the country could have been brought under planned pisciculture, out of 1,46,890 hectares of closed waterbodies in the country.



A traditional way of fishing.

bodies including rivers, canals, beels and flood-plains are the main sources of fish production. But recently fish production from open waterbodies has decreased alarmingly. About 90 per cent of the whole fish production was yielded from open bodies in 1960s that has declined to about 49 per cent only. That is why the Fisheries

With the technical assistance of FAO a project was undertaken in 1990 to strengthen organisational infrastructures in fisheries sector. Under the project, some programmes were conducted for extension of pisciculture in Natore, Gaibandha, Rajshahi and Kurigram districts.

Later, the programme was

ment Project" began in 1987-88 with the monetary and technical assistance of Asian Development Bank to motivate people in pisciculture.

The programme is being run in Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Bogra and Dinajpur districts to extend especially the cultivation of fish of ruhi species. Under the progra-

Nilphamari to hatch fish fry and train fish-cultivators and extension workers. 5000 ponds have so far been covered under this project to produce an additional amount of 7000 metric tons of fish very soon.

There are, however, allegations that the concerned department is not much interested in pisciculture in

—Star photo by SK Enamul Haq

Poor condition of hospital in Satkhira

One bed for every 40,000 people

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Sept 9: Inadequate number of doctors, shortage of medicines, beds and equipment in the hospital has been hampering proper treatment of the people of Satkhira district for a long time.

The 50-bed hospital naturally cannot cope with the increasing number of patients due to inadequate number of beds.

The existing beds can only meet 25 per cent requirement of the patients seeking admission. But surprisingly to note that this is the only hospital in the entire district comprising 18 lakh people means that there is one bed for 40 thousand people which is too meagre to meet minimum requirements worth mentioning.

It is essential that this hospital be converted into a 100-bed fullfledged hospital with adequate facilities such as experienced physicians, well trained nurses, instruments and life saving drugs and with maternity child welfare, dental, eye specialist with instrument and other arrangements.

At present most of the costs and bedsheets of the hospital have become worn out and rarely replaced by new ones, it is alleged.

A large number of patients both males and females who come from remote areas of the district return without proper treatment for want of accommodation and medicines.

The only imbalance in the hospital remains out of order off and on and the seriously ill patients cannot be shifted to Khulna or Dhaka for want of ambulance. In emergency cases the people can use other vehicles in exchange for Taka 2000 to Taka 4000.

The only X-ray machine also remains out of order for most of the time and for lack of films, the patients are ad-

vised to have their X-rays done from private clinics.

The water supply is almost absent or irregular and the patients and staff of the hospital take water from hand driven tubewell.

The drains, hospital floor and other places of the hospital are not kept clean and bad odour is always emitted. The latrines and urinals are hardly cleaned.

There is no separate ward for patients suffering from infectious diseases.

The government office time in the hospital is not maintained and no doctors are available after 1.30 pm, it was alleged. The visitors and outsiders visit the hospital now and then and the patients full disturbed.

Cows, dogs and rams are seen moving inside the hospital compound. Some times stray dogs are seen roaming here and there.

When contacted, some doctors of the hospital informed this correspondent that there is no sufficient medicines in the hospital. Both indoor and outdoor patients are provided with only prescriptions. The poor indoor patients have to purchase medicines from markets.

There is no blood bank in the hospital and the patients are to collect blood from outside and sometimes bring blood from Khulna or Jessore.

The diets supplied to the patients are not up to the standard it was alleged.

It may be mentioned here that the construction of Thana Health Complexes were completed few years ago but these are not equipped with necessary medical facilities.

These thana hospitals should be made fullfledged with minimum 50 beds with maternity, family planning, surgical, dental and other arrangements.

Apart from this, it is required that every union should be provided with health centres equipped with maternity and child welfare arrangements promised by the previous governments.

Mystery of Misti's death yet to be unearthed

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 9: The mystery of the alleged unnatural death of Flora Misti, 17, a resident student of Government Women's College of Barisal is yet to be unveiled. She appeared in the HSC examination this year.

Misti was allegedly kidnapped and killed in a village under Agaljhara thana of the district between August 8 to August 10 last. Mother of the victim Parul Mandal lodged a murder case in the court of Barisal Senior Special Judge against three persons who are Richard Tofi Biswas, Sadananda Biswas and Sarojini Biswas of Tarusen village under Agaljhara thana. Police recovered the body of Misti hanged with a tree on August 10.

Later police filed an UD case and sent the body to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital for autopsy. The report was prepared on 12th.

Parul Mandal disagreed with the report and later filed a case with the Senior Special Judge Court of

Barisal. Plaintiff in her petition said, Richard Tofi Biswas, one of the accused, on August 8 kidnapped Misti from government Barisal Women's College Hostel and took her to his village home at Agaljhara thana near the house of Misti. Meantime, Tofi prepared an affidavit of marriage with the fake signature of Misti from the notary public of Barisal Bar Association.

After two days, they killed Misti and hung her body with a near by tree. Later, they announced the death of Misti as a suicidal one, she added in her petition.

Death of Misti now is a very sensational case in Barisal. Tofi, the main accused, reportedly is still at large.

Meanwhile, Rani Bhattacharjee, President, Mahila Parishad, Barisal district unit, demanded unveiling the death mystery of Misti and immediate arrest of the culprits who are responsible for the tragic death of illfated college student.



SYLHET: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman addressing a public meeting at Gobindaganj bazar under the auspices of Chhatak thana Jubadal recently. —Star photo

Farmers in Satkhira see no future in jute output

From Abu Ahmed

SATKHIRA, Sept 9: Jute cultivation has been gradually decreasing in seven thanas of the district, one of the largest jute growing areas in country.

The raw jute has seen low rates disappointing borrowers.

This is the main cause of reducing the acreage of jute cultivation in the district.

Jute had been cultivated on 30,000 hectares of land in the district during pre-liberation period. At present the area of jute cultivation has fallen to 9,650 hectares. Only about 2500 hectares of land out of targeted 9,650 hectares have been achieved in Satkhira district during the current season.

The production of jute is not satisfactory in the district this season due to natural calamity. It is learnt that jute seeds are generally sown in the month of March and April and it is harvested from

July to August. During the sowing period of jute, lands of the district were very dry and during the maturing period of jute weather was also unfavourable for the jute plants.

New harvest of jute is found in hats and bazars of the district. Market sources said, the jute is being sold between Taka 900 to 1000 per quintal according to quality in the local markets.

Some jute growers said, although the price of jute is higher than the previous year, the farmers are not benefited because the average loss per quintal of jute is more than Taka 900 due to the higher prices of fertilizers and pesticides.

The government owned jute purchasing centres have been closed for an indefinite period, where the growers sold their product at fair price. The middlemen and brokers are taking advantages

of this situation. Many drought hit farmers of the district sold their standing jute in advance at the rate of Taka 450 to 500 per quintal following the previous years selling rates.

The peasants of this category are not getting agricultural loans from the banks either Krishi, Sonali, Agrani or Janata as some dishonest bank employees harass them in various grounds, it is alleged.

On the other hand, the jute based cottage industries of the district are on the verge of extinction for want of incentive and patronisation. Consequently a large number of women of the district are under that of unemployment.

They make a number of handicrafts out of jute such as fancy bags, dolls and carpet earning a huge amount of foreign currency.

Dacoits loot launch passengers

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 9: At least ten passengers were injured and wealth including cash money of about two lakh taka were looted when a passenger launch, ML Mohabbat, was attacked by a group of armed dacoits in Lahalia river in Patuakhali district in early hours recently.

Witnesses said, when ML Mohabbat, a Baherchar bound passenger launch started from Patuakhali, in the night after half an hour a group of armed dacoits numbering 10 to 12 in disguise of passenger swooped on the passengers. Dacoits attacked and seriously injured the sareng (master) of the launch Abdul Jabbar and took the control of the launch at gun point.

Later dacoits took the launch near Sailla Station and looted wealth and cash money from the passengers. During one hour long dacoity they beat the passengers on board mercilessly. Dacoits decamped with the booties leaving the launch there.

It is to be mentioned here that there was no armed guard in the launch. This launch was attacked by dacoits four times in this route during last one year, sources said.

A case was filed Patuakhali sadar thana in this connection.

8 people held for possessing arms, selling drugs

SAVAR, Sept 9: Savar thana police rounded up eight people last week on charge of possessing arms and selling banned syrup, phenisidyle, reports UNB.

Police arrested four people, Sabuj Raj Bangshi, Sanker, Nirnanjan and Prodeep, from Aminbazar Bagichar Tek bridge and recovered a pipegun from their possession.

Besides, they held another four people, Mokhles, Tapan, Khalil and Obaidur, from Savar bazar bus-stop for selling phenisidyle. Some 200 bottles of phenisidyle were also recovered from them.

Flood damages crops worth Tk 40 cr

• Tk 40 cr
• Sherpur

SHERPUR, Sept 9: Standing crops worth about Tk 40 crore have been damaged in the recent devastating flood in five thanas of the district, reports UNB.

Local farmers apprehended that paddy production in the district may fall sharply in the current season as a vast track of seedbeds have been affected by the rolling flood waters.

Officials said the rampaging flood affected some 3.83 lakh people of 51 unions in Sadar, Nalitabari, Sreebari, Jhenigati and Nakla thanas. About 7,297 houses in the thanas have been damaged totally while 76,126 were affected partially, they added.

About 309 km roads in the district have been wasted away while 26 km of embankments were damaged totally in the recent flood.

Meanwhile, the Disaster Management and Relief Ministry has sanctioned Tk 4.5 lakh in cash, 415 metric tons of wheat, 300 metric tons of rice, 4,000 pieces of sarees and lungis and 500 tins of biscuits for the flood affected people.

Three cases of UD in P'khali

PATUAKHALI, Sept 9: Three unnatural deaths (UD) were reported from different places of the district in the last 15 days, reports UNB.

Mijanur Rahman, 10, son of late Saleemuddin of the village Mendhiabad in Mirganj thana allegedly committed suicide by taking poison on August 26.

The reason behind his suicide could not be known. Mokhleshur Rahman, a farmer of village Chahatbania in Golachipa thana, was killed recently as a thunderbolt struck him while he was ploughing in the field.

Female students provided with scholarship

From Our Correspondent

KUSHITIA, Sept 9: Female students of 34 schools and 3 madrasahs have been provided with scholarship to the tune of Taka 14 lakh under Female Secondary School Assistant Project introduced by the government for developing female education in the country. About 5000 female students were benefited by this scholarship from January to June of the current year. Besides five lakh taka have been sanctioned as tuition fees in these schools.



Women labourers toiling on the Nashipur Jute Seed Farm, ten miles from Dinajpur town, run by the Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation. The labourers receive Tk 38 only for a staggering 8 hours of labour.

—Star photo by Morshed Ali Khan

Tk 3 lakh smuggled motor parts recovered

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Sept 9: Kaliganj thana police seized a truck and recovered smuggled motor parts worth Taka more than three lakh recently, it is learnt.

According to reports, a contingent of police led by OC Abdur Rashid, Kaliganj thana acting on a secret information stopped a truck No Jessore Ta-1441 at Kaliganj rail gate at 12.30 am of September 7 and recovered spare parts of motor vehicles including bearing, reams and other items worth Taka at least 3,10,000. The truck was coming from Darsana of Chuadanga district toward Dhaka, police said.

A case was lodged with Kaliganj thana in this connection and police arrested the helper, Mithu while the driver managed to flee, police informed.

19 persons honoured for their contributions

From Our Correspondent

HABIGANJ, Sept 9: An impressive function was held here Friday to honour nineteen persons of Habiganj district for their contributions in different fields, reports BSS.

Fazle Hasan Abed, the Executive Director of the BRAC, was the Chief guest at the function organised by the newspaper "Swadhikar" marking a decade of its publication. The paper gave awards to nineteen persons, living or posthumously, at the function held at the town hall.

Zakaria Chowdhury, former adviser, Hasan Shahriar, senior journalist and former president of the National Press Club and Mahabur Rab Sadi Chowdhury, a former parliament member and sub-sector commander in the area during Liberation War, were special guests at the function.

Those honoured for their contributions in different

fields are Late Major General M A Rab and Late Commandant Manik Chowdhury (for liberation war), Late Vice-Chancellor M A Rashid and Principal M B Chowdhury (education), Late Bipin Chandra Pal and S A M S Kibria (international arena), Fazle Hasan Abed and Ali Ahmed (social service), Matur Rahman Chowdhury and Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury (journalism), Ustad Babar Ali and Subir Nandy (music), M A Samad (films), Sahabuddin Ahmed and Moulud Hossain (sports), Syed Md Kaiser (industrial development) and Juna Chowdhury (acting).

Presided over by Shaban Miah, editor of the "Swadhikar", the function was addressed by eminent persons of the district including advocate Chowdhury Abdul Hye, journalist Mansuruddin Iqbal, pourashava chairman Shahid Chowdhury, Golam Mostafa Rafiq and some of the recipients of the awards.