

### Tk 19 lakh agri rehabilitation plan in Bhola

BHOLA, Sept 11: Government sanctioned Tk 19 lakh for post-flood agri rehabilitation programme in seven thanas of the district in the current aman season, reports UNB.

According to Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department (AED), about 54 metric tons of urea, 43.2 metric tons of TSP, 18 metric tons of MP, 18 metric tons of Zypsum, 2.4 metric tons of Zinc and 18 metric tons of aman seeds will be distributed among 3,600 marginal farmers.

Each farmer will get 15 kg Urea, 12 kg TSP, five kg MP, five kg Zypsum, five kg aman seeds and 660 gram zinc fertiliser, he added.

Meanwhile, the District Agricultural Rehabilitation Coordination Committee has been formed headed by the Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Director of AED will act as member-secretary of the committee.

### Oldman crushed to death in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent. SYLHET, Sept 11: An oldman was crushed under the wheels of a speeding minibus on Sylhet-Jakiganj road Thursday afternoon.

The victim Anwar Ali, 68, of village Balitka under Jakiganj thana was returning home from the Shahgali market on foot. At about 7 pm he met his tragic end of life when reached at a place near parchak Battalion and a speeding minibus (Sylhet BA-4217) knocked him down and crushed him under its wheels. He died on the spot. Police sent the body to the Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital for post-mortem and seized the vehicle. However, the driver and helper managed to escape. A case has been registered with the police.

### RAKUB to give Tk 250 cr loan

CHAPAINAWBAGANJ, Sept 11: Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank has undertaken a plan to disburse Tk 250 crore as loan in 16 northern districts of the country during the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

The districts are — Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Natore, Naogaon, Pabna, Sirajganj, Bogra, Joypurhat, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and Panchagar.

### Jeep falls into ditch: 2 killed

From CHT Correspondent. KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 11: Two people were killed and 10 others injured when a jeep fell into a roadside ditch at Pablikhali in Dighinala thana of the district on Friday.

The dead were identified as Ripon Chakma (22) and Priti Bikash Chakma. Ripon died on the spot while Priti succumbed to his injuries at Khagrachhari sadar hospital.

Police said the jeep loaded with paddy and some passengers coming from Babuchhara skidded off the road and plunged into the ditch when the driver lost its control. Driver and helper of the jeep fled the scene after the accident.

### 20 injured as bus falls in ditch

From Our Correspondent. BRAHMANBARIA, Sept 11: At least 20 persons were injured in a bus accident while a Dhaka bound Kutu-Bus plunged into way side ditch at Meer Hati, 2 kilometre off from Brahmanbaria district recently.

According to sources, a uncontrolled speeding 'Kutu-Dhaka'-bus bearing the number Dhaka-Metro-02-0446 failed the breaks near Meer Hati turning on Brahmanbaria-Dhaka highway and plunged into wayside ditch. As a result 20 persons were injured. Three of them were admitted into Brahmanbaria sadar hospital in critical condition and the rest were released after first-aid.

The admitted persons were Bashar, 25, Ranjan Ali, 28, and Moniruzzaman, 32. The driver and the helper of the ill-fated bus managed to escape. A case was filed with Brahmanbaria police in this connection.

## Two lakh inmates of 'model hamlets' deprived from any govt aid

From A K M Zahoorul Huq

KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 11: The acute scarcity of food, malaria and intestinal diseases have so far claimed more than two hundred lives during the last nine months in 7th model hamlets inhabited by the insurgency-affected non-tribals in the three hill districts of Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban, said the speakers in a press conference yesterday at Khagrachhari Press Club.

The insurgency-affected non-tribals were refugees in 74 make-shifts in the safer places withdrawn from their hearths and homes by the government in 1988 for a period of six months with an assurance of providing free ration at the rate of 84 kilogram per card for a family monthly including Tk 300 as recurring expenditure in addition to provide free medicare services and education to their children ensuring their safety and security.

In an overcrowded press conference attended by hundreds of supporters — inmates of the poverty-prone 'model hamlets' and leaders yesterday, the speakers al-

leged that, suspending the supply of ration for the last three months due to red-tapism and dilly-dallying attitude of the Special Affairs Division at the Prime Minister's Secretariate the government has pushed the hapless two lakh inmates of 26,220 families, concentrated in model hamlets of Khagrachhari hill district to live inhuman life violating even the very minimum human rights.

The leaders of Bangali Krishak Kalyan Parishad — a cluster village based organization — who arranged the press conference alleged that during their confined life in the so-called 'model hamlets' for the last nine years, the tribal insurgents, better known as Shantibahini, the armed cadre of the Parbatya Chattagram Jono Sanghati Samity sanctuaries in Indian territory have so far killed 20 thousand peace-loving non-tribals and abducted about five thousand inmates of the cluster villagers refuted by the government.

Abdul Awal, General Secretary of the organization alleged that the non-tribals

who were evicted repeatedly from the model hamlets towards settlement and rehabilitation of the tribal refugees repatriated from the Indian state of South Tripura did not get any sort of compensation and government assistance adding that the Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachhari hill district did not disburse any amount of money to them to restart their life anew which was committed by the government.

The inmates of the 'model hamlets' would get ration at the rate of 78 kilogram instead of declared 84 kilogram because of 24,500 ration cards were issued as against 26,220 families, the speakers observed. They demanded immediate insurance of ration cards to the deprived 1,720 families to minimise their sufferings.

Describing the tale of woes of the cluster villagers, terming it as 'concentration camp' the speakers said, 'we have leading most inhuman life to any extent as there is no scope of earning our livelihood there. Nine years is obviously an enough period.

We were withdrawn and refunded for six months. Now we wish to go back to our homesteads. We would like to lead a secured life'.

Accusing the government, the speakers further said, it is a bare violation of human rights to keep two lakh people concentrated in the name of 'refuge' in 'unlooked for' and 'uncared' model hamlets almost a decade in a sovereign country under a democratic government.

Failing restoration of supply of ration and issuance of ration cards to the deprived families by September 15 next, the speakers warned that they would launch a greater movement from the 20th instant in the district to press home their demands. Organizing Secretary of Bangali Krishak Kalyan Parishad, Shahidul Islam, Central Committee leader Anwar Hussain, Mamunur Rahman, UP, Chairman, Abdul Aziz, Commissioner, Anwar Hussain among others were present while General Secretary, Abdul Awal read out the written press statement in the press conference.

## New technique introduced to make mini prawn hatchery

From Shirin Akhter

CHANDPUR, Sept 11: Prawn is one of the important commercial fish of Bangladesh. Due to its demand and value it is now called golden fish. This fish is produced in abundance in different parts of our country. When this fish is produced in fresh water it is called prawn and it is called shrimp when it is produced in saline water. The country earn a lot of foreign exchange every year by exporting prawn in various countries of the world.

In Bangladesh fresh water prawn farming is entirely dependent on the juveniles collected from the sea areas. But wild prawn fry can never meet the increasing demand of fish farmers. The export and consumption of prawn in the country and abroad is increasing day by day. Hence attempts were made to develop prawn hatchery at Riverside Fisheries Research Institute located in Chandpur.

Md Wahed Ali Pramanike, Research Officer, in cooperation with Dr G C Halder, Chief Scientific Officer, of

Chandpur Fisheries Research Institute introduced a new technique to make a mini prawn hatchery. It took about two and a half years to invent the new technique of hatchery. This hatchery can be used on commercial basis. The production cost is about Tk 35,000. Natural prawn production is reduced in our country due to reasons including large scale use of pesticides in paddy fields, construction of embankments and irrigation projects. So fresh water prawn fry can be increased by artificial breeding. In our country there is scarcity of fresh water prawn fry. We can easily increase prawn production by using this mini prawn hatchery. Every day a large number of fish farmers visit the institute to know how the technique of this hatchery.

The hatchery can be installed by an individual farmer. The hatchery consists of three main components: Bio-filter unit, rearing tank unit (chari) and air blower or air pump unit. An used plastic drum of 200-250

litre capacity is converted into a bio-filter. The rearing tank or chari of 200-250 litre capacity is made of reinforced cement and concrete. With a single prawn hatchery of this capacity a farmer can easily produce about 20,000 to 25,000 larvae in a single cycle of 40 days. About 3 cycles per year (season) can easily be run and a total of 60,000 to 75,000 larvae can be produced from a single bio-filter operated hatchery. Capital and operating cost needed for constructing and running such prawn hatchery is about Tk 35,000 and the gross revenue earning will be about between Tk 60,000 and 75,000 per season.

Hence, the net profit would be around Tk 30,000 per season. Potential prawn farmers can now easily adopt the technology of prawn hatchery and produce their needed larvae both for culture and sale. This technology of prawn hatchery now needs intensive extension for wide adoption by the farmers and to meet the demand of the prawn larvae.

## Sonail embankment— not much of a help

From Our Correspondent



GAIBANDHA: A scene of Station Road in the town submerged by flood water. It took several days to recede due to largely unplanned construction of embankment around Gaibandha town.

GAIBANDHA, Sept 11: Sonail embankment constructed across the river Ghagot along eastern bank is creating more problems than bringing solution.

It is reported that every year during rainy seasons vast areas of Sadullapur, Fulchari, Gaibandha Sadar thanas including Gaibandha pourashava its submerged by flood water due to existence of Sonail embankment. Moreover, there is no sluice gate anywhere on the embankment to facilitate out let of stagnant water. As a result water is accumulated damaging aman crops on thousands of hectares of land. On the other hand, maximum areas of pourashava are being flooded as soon as water rushes. It takes almost a fortnight to recede the standing water.

With a view to save the areas, Kholahati, Ghagora, Gideri, Boali, Badiakhali under Gaibandha sadar, Kanchipara, Udakhali, Uria, Gajaria under Fulchari thana, from flood water and to drain out the stranded water the embankment was constructed. The embankment was constructed in the fiscal year 1985-86 under Swiss and Dutch financial assistance spending Taka two crore 30 lakh 41 thousand. The work was implemented by Water Development Board (WDB). Eleven miles long Sonail

embankment was constructed through Kholahati, Ghagora, Boali and Badiakhali unions under Gaibandha sadar thana along the eastern bank of river Ghagot and Atrai just to save crop land of eastern areas from flood water and preserving water inside canals of the embankment for using it during dry season. Besides, the plan included construction of several sluice gates to facilitate out let of stagnant water but no such out-let channel was built anywhere on the embankment. As a result accumulated water inside the embankment could not be removed immediately which takes a long time to recede and consequently caused maximum damages to the standing crops. According to district agriculture department there are 5,700 hectare of cultivable land inside commanded area of the embankment.

The source further added, concerned authority constructed 11 miles long embankment just to protect only 5,700 hectare land but on the contrary it adversely affected crop land on 55,000 hectare in western block. This vast tract of areas remain over flooded during rainy seasons, it is reported.

The reason of this adverse situation of Sonail embankment is that naturally river Ghagot has been flowing from

west to eastward direction and fell into the river Brahmaputra at Rasoolpur. But on construction of the said embankment across the river Ghagot normal flow of water is being resisted by the unplanned construction of the embankment. During the rainy seasons onrush of water first hit Gaibandha pourashava overflowing the western bank of river Ghagot and soon the water spread to the other southern areas of the district.

During the last flood, river Ghagot was flowing 2.08 metre above the danger mark while river Brahmaputra was flowing 1.17 metre above. At that time water level of Brahmaputra basin recorded 0.87 centimetre below than that of river Ghagot. Before construction of Sonail embankment it took only three to five days to recede flood water but on construction of said embankment flood water gets accumulated in and around Gaibandha town area which takes a fortnight to recede at a Sonail's pace.

According to an expert of water resources, it was a wise policy if two counter embankments are constructed along the both sides of river Ghagot just to halt the overflowing banks and unexpected flood situation could be averted at the same time accumulation of flood water will be stopped.

### Property worth Tk 20 lakh gutted

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 11: Property worth about a total of Tk 20 lakh were gutted in a big fire that took place at Govindaganj bazar under Chhatak thana of Sunamganj district recently. As many as 10 business establishments were burnt to ashes in the fire originated from electric short circuit at about 3:00 am on the day of incident.

According to the reports, the gutted business establishments include, one rice and atta mill (with godown), one pharmacy, one general store, one tea stall, one bakery and godown, one clothe store and 4 others. The incident reportedly originated from short circuit soon spread to the adjacent establishments.

All these stores were gutted before the Fire Bridge team from Sylhet reached the place of occurrence, local people informed. The local people tried to extinguish the fire, but all was in vain.

### Seminar on 'total laryngectomy' held in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 11: A special seminar on Total Laryngectomy was held here at the gallery No 1 in Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College on Wednesday last organised by the Department of ENT and Teachers Association, SBMC, Barisal.

Professor Md Abdul Karim Mollah, Principal, SBMC, Barisal was present in the special seminar as chief guest.

The seminar was attended by Dr Sudhansu Kumar Ballar, R S ENT, Dr Akhtar Hossain Chowdhury, MU General Hospital, Barisal, Dr Kamal Mostafa, Asst Professor of ENT, Dr Haroon or Rashid, Registrar, ENT Department, SBMC, Dr Abrar Ahmed, Asst Professor, ENT, SBMC, Barisal, Dr Debashish Banik, Consultant, Anesthetist, SBMCH and Dr Mahbubur Rahman, junior Consultant, ENT, General Hospital, Barisal.

### AED undertakes agriculture rehabilitation plan in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Sept 11: Faridpur district Agriculture Extension Department has taken up a massive agriculture rehabilitation programme to restore the losses caused by heavy downpours and frequent floods this year, according to an official source.

The source told this correspondent that the programme includes cultivation of transplanted aman on 347 acres of land, boro on 1960 acres, wheat on 553 acres, maize on 30 acres, mustard on 190 acres and masur

(lentil) on 80 acres in eight thanas of the district.

The seeds, seedlings and fertilizers required for the successful implementation of the programme will be supplied free of cost by the district Agriculture Extension Department among 9480 affected cultivators having marginal lands, the source said.

The seeds, seedlings and fertilizers to be distributed free of cost are worth Taka 43 lakh and 20 thousand, the source added.

### Gaibandha — a safe transit point for smugglers

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Sept 11: Gobindaganj thana under Gaibandha district has now become a safe transit point of smugglers and den of anti-social elements. As such, the markets of the areas are being flooded with Indian contraband items.

According to local people smugglers use bus routes as a very safe way for the movement of contraband items. Huge such items are being smuggled into the Bangladesh territory through Hill, Fulbari, Mohanpur borders under Dinajpur district. Later the goods reach the Gaibandha and adjacent districts through Hill — Ghoraghat — Gobindaganj route. The smugglers generally use coaches, bus and truck specially those which run in night time. Many of the night coaches and trucks carry huge contraband items to capital city. All such matter happens allegedly under the secret contact with law enforcing agencies.

Occasionally police recover a little quantity of such smuggled goods as and when contact fails between the member of law enforcing agencies and gang of smugglers, it was alleged.

Among the contra-band items like salt, sugar, onion, spices, bi-cycles and its spare parts, cattle, drug, oil, cosmetics, cloth, rice etc enter

the country in a lot almost every day without any hindrances and later distributed to different markets.

Smugglers continue to supply Indian saree blouse piece, cloth at random. About 75 per cent of total women community of these areas have been using Indian saree.

According to the opinion of house wives they prefer Indian saree for its attractive colour and design. Moreover, those are available in a very low price against the high price of country made saree. So the Indian sarees are being used in the remote village areas and sold almost openly. The name of some Indian variety sarees well known to our women folk are Radhakrishna, Indian Katan, Joy Jagodish, Kajal, Ganga-Jamuna, Kerala Katan, Saddam Katan, Orgendi, Akash, Sree Devi, Cheek-minu, Kinu silk, Plain minu, Chicken minu etc.

Meanwhile so many mini markets were erected in and around Gobindaganj thana area where whole sale trade of Indian items are being held in the morning and evening are controlled by the local influential marchants. Everyday whole-sellers and retailers throng in this area for the collection of Indian items. In Gobindaganj area out of total commodities 70 per cent are Indian items.

### 3028 acres of land handed over to JMB in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 11: A total of 3,028 acres of land of 13 'mouzas' in Saidabad union under Sirajganj sadar thana have been acquired and formally handed over to the Authority of Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project (JMB) in the western part of the river, Syed Abdul Malek, Deputy Commissioner handed over the area to the JMB authority at Majhail char.

It is learnt from a source of the JMB that by handing over of land in the western part, works on constructing the river control corridor, guide embankment and approach road will be intensified. Works on approach road, however, are on programme at Nalka in Raiganj thana area.

The JMB sources expressed hope to complete the project by December, 1997. During the handing over JMB representatives, 609 tractors, local UP chairman Khademul Islam Moni and the landowners were present.

The DC told The Daily Star that 7,500 land owners will get Tk about 15 crore as compensation against 3,028 acres of acquired land.

### Rat killing drive underway in Magura

MAGURA, Sept 11: A huge number of rats were killed in the district by enthusiastic farmers at the call of Agricultural Extension Department (AED) officials, says UNB.

The call was given at the inaugural function of a month-long rat killing drive-1995 organised by AED on August 30.

Begum Shamsunnahar Ahmed, MP, inaugurated the drive at a function at the Sadar Thana Parishad auditorium.

AED Deputy Director Abul Hossain Mollah attended the function as chief guest. Speakers at the function urged the people to come forward to make the drive a success.

## Women developing skills in FP, healthcare, income generating activities

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 11: When the government facilities of healthcare, mass-education and income generating programmes can not reach the common people, the Sirajganj Uttaran Mohila Sangstha (SUMS) achieved the confidence of people in rural areas.

The Sirajganj Uttaran Mohila Sangstha (SUMS), a district based non-government voluntary organisation (NGO) have been working in the district since its inception in 1980 and was registered with the Women Affairs Department in 1985. The organisation was registered with Foreign Donation (voluntary activities) in 1994.

The NGO have taken up schemes to bring the rural women into the mainstream of development through increased awareness in improving access to healthcare services, skill development, education and income generating activities. The projects taken by the SUMS include Family Planning service project Family Planning Mother

and Child healthcare project, non-formal primary education project, credit programme, family life education and TBA programme. A part of Sirajganj Municipal area, Ratankandi and Bagbari unions are brought under the projects of SUMS.

While visiting some project areas of SUMS, it was learnt that a total of 10,500 fertile couples out of 19,000 are the active users of family planning materials from SUMS. The NGO also organises at least two orientation programmes every year for the project staff with the help of different resource persons of the district including the Deputy Director of Family Planning, medical officers, thana family planning officers and social workers.

To reduce maternal and child mortality and to improve health consciousness, Mother and Child Health (M&CH) care programme are taken up. More than 80 per cent children of the project area are brought under Extended Programme of Immunization (EPI) Nurses training among 50 village

women have been completed to ensure safe delivery in the project areas comprising of about one lakh people.

Non-formal primary education in BRAC style is also introduced by SUMS in Sirajganj Municipal area. Besides, credit programme for the destitute women in different income generating projects including poultry, small trade, cottage industries and small scale dairy farms are introduced.

Visiting a project on Family Planning at Ratankandi union is sadar thana, it was observed that a positive outlook towards education, family planning and child health care have been increased and village women are non-conscious about the social evils like dowry and polygamy. Quality of leadership among the village women is also on increase.

The participants of the NGO show this correspondent some techniques to set up improved smokeless over. More than 200 families are using such oven of SUMS. A 15-day training course for 50 village women was



SIRAJGANJ: Participants in anti smoking rally organised by SUMS at Sirajganj.



SIRAJGANJ: Participants in 15-day midwifery training of SUMS to ensure safe delivery in rural areas.

concluded recently in Sirajganj town to ensure safe delivery of pregnant women who can not take the assistance of the hospitals and clinics. The SUMS is affiliated

with ADAB and gets regular assistance of other donor agencies to continue the programmes.

When contacted, Safina Lohani, Secretary of SUMS told The Daily Star that sin-

cere efforts in any development programme can never go unrewarded. The SUMS have achieved confidence of the poor and helpless people of the project areas.