

Residential accommodation problems keep on increasing in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, Feb 26: Housing problem has become acute in the district headquarters of Chuadanga for a long time. The population of this town has already risen to over 60 thousand. But the construction of new houses, residential quarters in particular has not been in proportion to the growth of population, mainly because of high prices of land and other construction materials it is learnt.

As a result the government officials, teachers, businessmen and students are suffering a lot of inconvenience for want

of proper accommodation. No government or autonomous body has so far taken up the matter nor has there been any appreciable private initiative for an effective solution of the acute housing problem of Chuadanga town.

Chuadanga was converted into a district in 1984. Since then its importance has increased several times. Besides during the last few years several regional offices of different scheduled bank and new bank branches and other offices including the district level offices of different department have started functioning in this town. But most of these organisations and departments do not have their own offices or quarters. Consequently, these offices have put a heavy pressure on the existing rented buildings and other houses. Chuadanga Government Girls High School, Chuadanga Adarsha Girls High

School, Girls College and some other institutions have also got hostels for their students.

The educational institutions like Government Boys' High School, Government College have got hostels of their own. But there is no accommodation for the teachers and other staff of these institutions.

The house owners of this town are taking full advantage of the situation and realising exorbitant rents, it is alleged. Due to shortage of residential houses, many employees of government autonomous and private organisations are to keep their families at their village homes, much to their inconvenience.

If the accommodation problems are to be solved in the town, adequate number of houses for office and residential purposes should be constructed, it is felt by all concerned.

The government should arrange construction of a large number of houses through agencies for distribution on hire-purchase system.

It may be noted here that the House Building Finance Corporation has stopped the loan distribution programme in Chuadanga district for a long time as a result the construction of new residential buildings in the town has decreased to a great extent.

It may further be noted here that in the greater districts there are housing estate for solving the accommodation problems of the middle and lower class employees and common people but there is no such arrangements has been made in this district.

The government should immediately take necessary steps to build new housing estate in the district headquarters of Chuadanga.

1,372 mt of wheat allotted for food for education in Bhola

BHOLA, Feb 26: Government allotted 1,372 metric tons of wheat under Food for Education Programme for 34,645 students of 254 government primary schools in 18 unions of eight thanas in the month of January, reports UNB.

According to official sources, 231 mts of wheat have been sanctioned for 5,968 students in Sadar, 105 mts for 4,237 students in Daulatkhani, 105 mts for 3,780 students in Borhanuddin, 354 mts for 8,253 students in Lal-mohon, 376 mts for 5,209 students in Charfassion, 120 mts for 4,319 students in Tajumuddin and 81 mts for 2,879 students in Monpura thanas.

Two Press Club members punished for misappropriating club money

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Feb 26: A member of Chapainawabganj Press Club has been expelled and the membership of another has been suspended for three months on the charge of misappropriation of money of the club.

According to a press release of the press club, a charge was brought by two members of the club, Imran Farooq Masoom and Kamal Uddin against Syed Najat Hossain and Zafrul-ul-Alam, the editors of the two local weeklies. According to the report of the investigation committee the charge was proved true and accordingly the above mentioned punishment was inflicted upon them in a general meeting last month.

Nawabganj Barta and the weekly Simter Kagal respectively that they took Tk 5 thousand from the officer in charge of the Shibganj thana in the name of the Press Club on the occasion of a cultural function named 'Holimanti Sandhya' arranged by Chapainawabganj Press Club and did not submit the amount to the fund.



Chassis of trucks imported from India left outside the Benapole Customs warehouse for a long time. Shortage of space inside the warehouse has forced the authority to park the vehicles outside. — Star photo

In Sherpur district

Indiscriminate use of fire wood threatens forest resources

From Our Correspondent

SHERPUR, Feb 26: Indiscriminate felling of trees for use in the brickfields has put forest resources in the district on the verge of extinction, according to local experts.

It has been alleged that about 15 brickfields in the district were using fire wood to burn bricks. The timber traders in collaboration with the brickfield owners were felling trees in the area threatening ecological balance.

Brickfield owners said scarcity of coal and non-availability of any alternative fuel have compelled them to use firewood.

The officials, however,

denied the charge and said supply of coal is adequate in the district. The owners use wood as it is comparatively cheaper, they said.

About 25 maunds of fuel are needed to burn one thousand bricks and daily requirement of each field is over 30 thousand maunds. This requirement doubles when work in the fields is in full swing in the months between January and March.

Five brickfield owners and some concern employees of brickfields in five thanas of the district were fined for violating ban on use of firewood for manufacturing bricks recently.

A mobile court comprised

of NDC Md Hazrat Ali and Magistrate Md Hayatullah fined them. Taka ten to fifteen thousand each. It is mentioned here that local elite brought the matter to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner Abdul Mobarak about indiscriminate use of firewood in the brickfields.

The brickfield owners violating the government ban were using thousands of maunds of firewood for manufacturing bricks instead of using coal. Local leaders expressed satisfaction over the action of the mobile court and called upon them to investigate other brickfields without further delay for necessary action.

Cement crisis stalls DPHE project works in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Feb 26: Installation work of UNICEF estate projects of Department of Public Health Engineering is being hampered badly for want of cement for last two months in Jhenidah district, it was learnt.

According to sources, Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) Jhenidah had completed site selection, money collection and other related works for allocated 85 Shallow Tubewells (STW), 125 Tara Deep Tubewells (DTW) and resinking work of allocated 216 tubewells long ago. But they were not in a position to start installation work for want of cement.

When contacted the Executive Engineer, DPHE Jhenidah admitted the fact. The Executive Engineer (XEN) expressed his hope that they were expecting to complete the work by June this year.

Regarding the work of Bangladesh Government (GOB) the XEN informed that they had received the allocation of 100 Shallow Tubewells and 39 Tara Deep Tubewells in Jhenidah sadar, Saikupa, Harinakundu, Kaliganj, Kotchandpur and Mohespur thanas. The work is expected to be completed by March this year, he said.

The XEN further informed that they also received the allocation of 3,125 sets of sanitary latrines. They had installed about 1,000 sets of the same. They are not in a position to complete the rest of the work for cement crisis any more, it was reported.

Sources said, in Jhenidah, Saikupa, Kaliganj, Kotchandpur and Mohespur pourasabha areas DPHE installed nine production tubewells, nine pump houses so far. Under the project another five production tubewells, five pump houses and 60 kilometre long pipelines is under construction at a cost of Taka 5.96 crore. The work is likely to be completed by the end of this fiscal year, the Executive Engineer informed.

Arms hunt 181 persons held, eight arms recovered

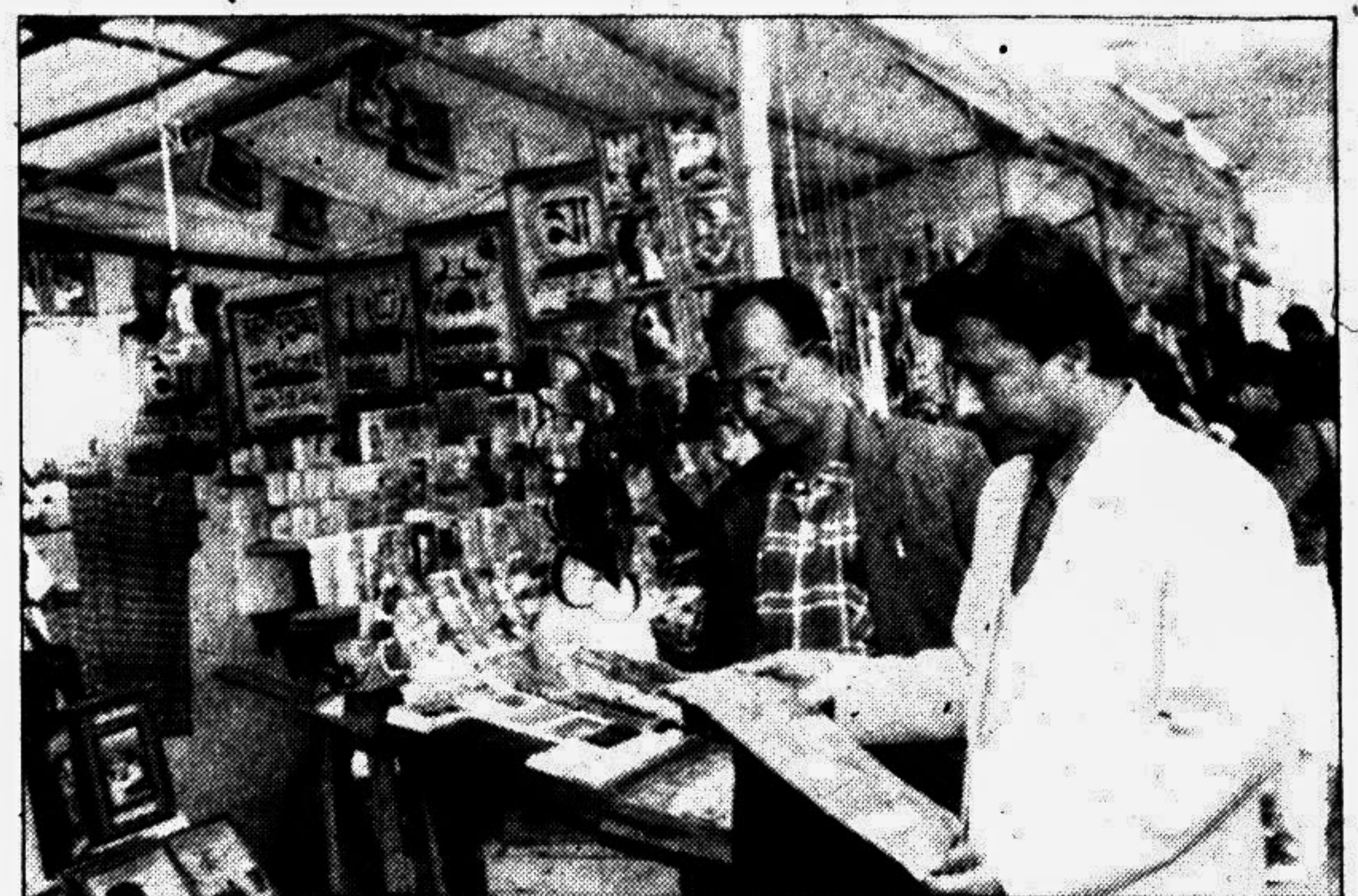
From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Feb 26: During the last 66 days of arms recovery drive ending on February 15 last jointly operated by army and police personnel in eight thanas of the district 181 persons were arrested and eight arms recovered, DSB source said.

Of 181 persons, 83 were arrested under GR 37 under CR and 61 under section 144.

The arms include, three country-made pistols, one toy pistol and four pipe guns.

Besides, eight bullets of rifle, six bullets of gun and six hand bombs were also recovered, the source said.



Visitors at a BSCIC handicraft stall held in observance of BSCIC Handicrafts Fair '96 in Jhenidah. — Star photo

If proper marketing facilities are available

Bangladeshi handicrafts can be made popular abroad

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Feb 26: If proper marketing facilities are available, the cottage industry in the country can play a key role to earn huge quantities of foreign currencies every year and thousands of unemployed youngmen or women may be benefitted from this. The speakers at a recent meeting held at District Collectorate building in Jhenidah expressed their opinion on the inaugural ceremony of BSCIC handicrafts fair '96 recently.

Presided over by Jamirul Alam, Deputy General Manager (DGM) BSCIC Jessore, Abdul Haq, Deputy Commissioner, Jhenidah attended the meeting as chief guest. Among others Anisur Rahman Khoka, Chairman, Jhenidah Pourasabha and Abdus Satter, Deputy Manager BSCIC, Jhenidah attended as special guests.

The speakers viewed that there was a bright prospect for the handicrafts made of jute,

bamboo, wood, iron, plastic, earth, paper, flowers, cloths, oyster etc. Further the 'misti pitha' (sweet cake) of Bangladesh was also popular abroad.

Atleast 50 stalls were on display in four day long 'BSCIC handicrafts fair' and the stall of 'Lalan Shah Kutir Shilpa' was declared as the best stall. Handicrafts worth Taka about 15 lakh was sold during the fair, it was reported.

An ambitious poverty alleviation programme

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Nov 26: The Ministry of Land has taken up an ambitious poverty alleviation programme of the marginal peasants on experimental basis. Under this programme thirty districts have been brought in first phase.

The project aims at rehabilitating marginal and landless peasants who remain unemployed most of the time of the year. The programme also includes mass education, medicare and sanitation awareness.

For successful implementation of the programme, Faridpur district administration has in the first phase selected two villages — Pal dangi and Paran Biswaser dangi under North Channel and Deceer Char unions of sadar thana. On careful survey 58 families of these two villages have been brought un-

der the purview of the scheme and interest free loan amounting to Taka 5 lakh and 50 thousand was distributed among the families in the first phase beginning from February 19, 1995. The loanes utilised the loan money for quick income generating activities by purchasing rickshaws, rickshaw van, fishing-nets, country boats and the like. By this time they have refunded the entire loans in eight instalments through the employees of the Revenue Department of respective area. Over and above each of them has been depositing Taka 20/- every day on an average with the bank.

Besides, five villages — Char Tepakhola under Deceer Char union and Char Tepurakandi, South Deceer Char and Madhabdia under North Channel union have

been brought under the programme in the second phase. A loan of Taka 28 lakh and 30 thousand has been distributed among 323 poor families. The loan money of the second phase is also being recovered regularly.

The entire sadar thana is expected to be brought under the programme through the rolling fund. Moreover, a demand of Taka 75 lakh has been placed to the Ministry of Land with a view to bringing the entire district under this project.

It may be mentioned here that it matters relating to the success of the programme, Faridpur district has stood first.

20 hurt in separate incidents

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Feb 26: At least 20 persons were injured, one of them seriously in two separate clashes in Saikupa thana of the district on February 21 last.

According to reports, two rival groups of village Rupdah faced each in Saikupa. The groups with Dhal, Falla, Ramda, Lathi and other lethal weapons just after Eid prayer at about 1:00 pm faced each other. At this Shariud, 25, Akbar Mollah, 35, Manirul Sheikh, 20, Amirul Islam, 31, Akhidul Seikh, 22, Feroj, 24, Bain Mollah, 25, Golam Rabbani, 55, Jamat Ali, 27, Tafsar Ali, 45 and eight others received injuries. Of them Amirul, Akhidul, Feroj, Jamat and Tafsar were admitted to Saikupa thana health complex and the rest were released after first aid.

According to another report, Nekbar Ali, 25 and his elder brother, Ali, 55, were injured when they were attacked by their opponent group at village Pulahari in Saikupa thana of the district on the same day. Both of them were rushed to Saikupa thana health complex. Of them condition of Akbar Ali was stated to be critical. No case was recorded with police so far.

Farmers' training programme concludes

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Feb 26: Farmers' training programmes lilted Scientific cultivation of winter vegetable and spices have been concluded here recently.

Atleast 180 leading farmers in six batches received the 3 day long training that began on January 28 under auspicious of Horticulture Development Project. The programmes were financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO).

The training programmes were conducted by M.R. Shaif, Retd. Director of Agricultural Extension Department, Ayub Hossain, Horticulturist of the district.

Mechanical trouble forces Rangpur Sugar Mills to suspend production

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Feb 26: Prospect of sugar production in Rangpur Sugar Mills Ltd under Gaibandha district is bleak during this current crushing season. Mechanical trouble in different units hinder the normal flow of production during this season which incurred a loss of Taka over five crore recently.

The mill in this crushing season went into production on November 17, 1995. Since opening the mill often faced interruption which resulted in 222 hours of production suspension till first week of January '96 as such the loss due to the production suspension stood at Taka over one crore.

According to the mill source, soon after the opening of the mill a number of troubles were reported in roller, boiling and processing units.

Total production was facing setback when Roller No 5 failed to operate due to some mechanical fault. Boiler of the mill could not be provided with sufficient heat and juice tank failed to supply adequate raw juice to the boiling unit, that caused overflowing of two thousand maunds of juice on January 1 which was ultimately damaged completely.

Due to lack of proper overhauling this year the mill went into operation as such production remain suspended for long 347 hours. According to an official source, a single hour suspension of production in the mill incur loss of Tk 40,000. Till first week of February production of the mills went off for long 847 hours incurring a loss of Taka nearly five crore.

Meanwhile protest meet-

ings of local Akkh Chashi Kalayn Parishad were held to regularise production of the mills. The speakers urged upon the higher authority to save the mills from corrupt employees and officers.

This season, target of sugar production was fixed at 14,940 metric tons by crushing 1,80,000 tons of sugar cane. Till February 3 total production of sugar reached to 5,592 tons by crushing 84,485 tons of cane.

Last year the mills produced total 15,567 metric tons of sugar against target 13,440 tons. According to mill source total production was marketed last year. The mills sold out molasses of 5,500 tons at the rate of Tk 1,425 per ton.

A pucca link road badly needed

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Feb 26: Communication between Kushtia town and northern parts of Jhenidah and Magura districts has due to lack of pucca (asphalted) road, it was learnt.

Talking to some established businessmen of the northern parts of Jhenidah and Magura districts it was learnt that 80 per cent essential commodities of Katlagari, Sarutia, Khulbaria, Gobindopur, Langalbandh, Amalsar and Tikerbila bazar are supplied from Kushtia town. In the rainy seasons essential goods including rice, wheat, flour, sugar, oil, potatoes and various kinds of stationeries are carried from Kushtia town by engine driven country boats through Gorai river. But after the month of August and September this riverine route is fully closed every year due to "drying up" of Gorai. As a result thousands of

traders and passengers of these areas have to depend on road communication. But the direct pucca road communication between Kushtia town and northern parts of Jhenidah and Magura districts has not yet been built.

According to reports there is a macadam road on the northern bank of Ganges Kobotak Project (GK) canal under Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) which links Kushtia and Langalbandh via Katlagari bazar. But this road is not suitable at all for running loaded trucks and buses as it is not pucca.

It was learnt that about a hundred kilometres long canal of GK Project runs by the northern side of Kushtia, Jhenidah and Magura districts. The authority of the project took a programme to construct pucca road on the month bank

of the main canal at the beginning of the project. According to the programme about 30 kilometre long pucca road from 'WAPDA Mor' of Asian High Way to Langalbandh bazar in Magura district had been constructed in the first phase before the independence. But the rest of the road, 50 kilometres from Langalbandh bazar to Kushtia has not yet been built.

As a result traders and passengers of these areas have to go to Kushtia town and adjoining areas for various purposes via Magura, Jhenidah or Saikupa.

M Ali, a student of Kushtia Government College who lives by the GK Canal Macadam Road told this correspondent that they have to suffer while going to college due to lack of direct pucca road communication between Kushtia and Langal-

bandh via Katlagari bazar. One or two minibuses ply on this macadam road occasionally. A large number of students go to their educational institutions from the area. They face difficulties to attend their institutions due to lack of good road communication.

Talking to a local leader it was learnt that a large number of people of the northern area of Jhenidah and Magura districts who live by the both side of GK project main canal are not able to communicate with the northern areas of the country including Kushtia, Bheramara, Paksey, Iswardi, Pabna, Rajshahi etc due to lack of pucca road.

Besides, the people of Jaduboyra, Katlagari, Kulumbaria have to go to Faridpur, Barisal or Dhaka by buses via Kushtia, Jhenidah or Magura which is about 90 km longer route.

If the concerned authority take up a programme to construct the GK project canal macadam road the socio-economic constitution of these areas will be changed.

Valuable worth Tk one lakh robbed in G'bandha

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Feb 26: A dacoity was committed at Rasoolpur union family welfare centre under Sadullapur thana last week.

The incident took place at deep night at about 1:30 am. A gang of 10 to 12 miscreants armed with fire arms raided the welfare centre. They took away a 80 cc motor cycle, cash, gold and valuables including equipment worth over Taka one lakh at the gun point. The miscreants threw away a television set on to the road side ditch while fleeing. A case was filed with Sadulla pur thana. None was arrested in this connection yet.



NATORE: Farmers attending a training programme funded by the ADB recently at the premises of district Horticulture Development Project. — Star photo



JESSORE: BDR personnel recently recovered contrabands worth Tk 64 lakh from Vekutia area. The goods were deposited with customs godown. — Star photo