

# Immediate steps needed to protect Chhatak town from river erosion

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, July 1: Erosion has caused a large-scale damage at many places of Sunamganj district during the last few years. A good number of shops in many important rural markets, dwelling houses, roads and others had already been devoured by the serious erosion. People in general have become worried much in absence of necessary steps to check it even after continuous erosion in the different parts of the district headquarters and industrial town of Chhatak during the last eight years. If immediate measures are not taken many new areas will also fall victim of the erosion, it is widely felt.

Sizeable areas of the industrial belt of Chhatak thana had been grabbed by the river Surma in recent years. The situation has been aggravating after the devastating floods of 1988. A good number of business establishments at the Chhatak bazar had also gone into the river. Besides, the serious erosion have also been causing damage to huge lands and shops in Doarabazar, Sachna and Raniganj bazar of the district. Sources claimed that, the local authorities had sent prepared projects to protect these commercial areas to the higher authorities, but no effective step has yet been taken to approve these. Raniganj bazar in Jagannathpur, Sachna bazar in Jamalganj and Doarabazar thana headquarters are some of the very important commercial centres of the vast areas of the district of Sunamganj.

While talking to this correspondent, Abdur Rahman a leading businessman of Raniganj bazar said, "we have sent a number of the petitions to the different authorities for checking the devastating erosion during the last eight years, but got no result yet."

Still, we are hopeful that, the government would do something to save the huge areas. Otherwise, a large number of business establishments, nationalised bank buildings, and dwelling houses will be eroded, he warned.

While visiting the Chhatak bazar this correspondent saw, a good number of shops on the road from east to west along the riverside hanging on the bamboo pillars. These may be grabbed by the Surma at any moment. In 1988-89 fiscal a 12-lakh taka scheme of bolder dumping was executed to protect the Chhatak bazar. Though the erosion could be checked temporarily, the situation against went serious. Considering the grave situation, the water development prepared a 5-crore scheme titled 'Chhatak bazar protection project', and sent it to the higher authorities for approval. The Board with an allocation of Taka 2

crore preliminarily approved the same, but, it could not be finalised for shortage of fund, sources informed. So, the fate of Chhatak town protection scheme has become uncertain, it is widely felt.

An official of the WDB said, Boulder Dumping along at least one kilometre area should be done immediately to protect the Chhatak town. It would cost about Taka 4 crore, he added.

A number of leading businessmen of Chhatak informed this correspondent that, big industrial units like Chhatak Cement Factory, Paper and Pulp Mill, and Slipper Factory had been set up at Chhatak. Besides, a good number of other and related commercial establishments had also been set up. So, urgent measures should be taken up to protect the locality, they viewed.

The district headquarters of Sunamganj is also in the grip of erosion. Every year, new areas go eroded in the river Surma. Recently, erosion is marked in the police line area of Sholaghar. The concerned authorities have prepared a Taka 20 lakh project to check erosion in the area and sent it to the higher authorities for approval, sources said. Erosion is also marked in the bazar areas. Official sources said that, works on a Taka 15 lakh project would be started soon to protect the bazar area.

Besides, serious erosion has been taking place at Wajkhalia area, near the town. Seasonal erosion there for the last three years had already grabbed huge areas, and it had now reached just near the Sylhet-Sunamganj Road. Earlier, large tracts of land near Pirojpur area and part of the Sunamganj-Jamalganj road had already been grabbed by the river. The erosion on the other side of Pirojpur has also been stronger. The erosion had abandoned part of the Jamalganj road. The Water Development Board is yet to take any step to check the erosion here for saving the road.



SYLHET: With the rise in water level in the river Surma, erosion has devoured a number of houses and shops at Chhatak recently. — Star photo

# Diarrhoea claims five children in Pabna

PABNA, July 1: Diarrhoea killed five children today and affected 40 more people in four villages in Sadar thana during the last 24 hours till Saturday, reports UNB.

Local people and hospital sources said the water-borne disease broke out in Parh Gobindapur, Malonchi, Nishchintapur, Nishipara and Ashutoshpur villages on Friday.

The dead are Hamza, 6, Mahela Khatun, 12, Shafi, 4, Munej, 8, and Sabura, 4. All died in the hospital this morning.

Some 37 severely affected people are under treatment at the district Sadar Hospital.

The well Surgeon attributed the outbreak of the disease to drinking polluted water by the villagers.

Twelve medical teams are working in the affected areas to combat the scourge, he informed.

Meanwhile, cholera and diarrhoea salines have reportedly gone out of the local market.

# Jubo League activist stabbed to death

From Our Correspondent KHULNA, July 1: A Jubo League activist, Nirmal Ghose, 25, was stabbed to death on Saturday evening on the Cemetery Road under Kotwali thana.

According to witnesses, a group of armed miscreants attacked him with daggers and razors at about 7:30 pm while he was coming out of his residence. He succumbed to his injuries on the way to Sadar Hospital.

Confirming the incident Kotwali Thana police has termed it as a non-political murder.

Earlier on June 23, another Jubo League activist Al Mamun, 24, of Bagmara Under Kotwali Thana was shot dead while he was returning home from the party office.

However, none was arrested till writing of this report.

# 52 pc of target land brought under cultivation Jute production may fall short of target in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, July 1: Jute production in all the five districts of greater Faridpur may fall significantly this year due to price hike and non-availability of necessary high yielding variety seeds, reports UNB.

The districts are Faridpur, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Gopalganj and Rajbari.

According to district Agriculture Extension Department sources, only 52 per cent of the large land was brought under Tosa variety of jute cultivation while only 20 per cent was brought under local variety.

Some farmers said they procured jute seeds from local markets at an exorbitant price, but the seeds were of lower quality. They also complained that they did not get jute seeds either Tosa or local variety from local BADC office (seed).

When contacted local BADC office over phone, some official said that they got only 5 tons

of Tosa seeds as against the allocation of 40 tons of seeds. The source further said that they received 5 tons of seeds on April 24 when the sowing season was almost over. As a result, only one ton and four hundred kg was sold and the rest 3 tons and 3 hundred kg is lying unsold in the store.

Local farmers also alleged that a sizeable quantity of seeds are being returned to the authority as those were not supplied in time.

Official sources said, about 13,152 hectares of land out of target 24,025 hectares have been brought under the Tosa variety and only 126 hectares of land out of 1,000 were cultivated under local variety in Faridpur district.

In Madaripur, Tosa was cultivated on about 12,000 hectares of land out of 17,060 hectares while local variety on 570 hectares out of 4,100

hectares. In Shariatpur, the target of cultivation of Tosa and local varieties was fixed at 6,820 and 2,453 hectares of land respectively but actual cultivation was on 4,426 and 2,183 hectares.

The cultivation target for Tosa, in Gopalganj, was on 8,685 hectares of land while local variety on 935 hectares but cultivated those only on 1,200 and 300 hectares of land respectively.

About 8,000 and 500 hectares of land have been brought under the cultivation against the target of 10,000 and 1,500 hectares of land for Tosa and local variety respectively in Rajbari district.

On the other hand, about 50 to 80 per cent of local farmers used Indian variety of jute seeds buying from black market between Tk 70 and 150 per kg.

# 389 schemes implemented in Majdee

MAJDEE COURT, (Noakhali), July 1: Some 389 schemes were implemented utilising 663 metric tons of wheat in six thanas and four pourashavas of the under test relief programme during the fiscal 1995-1996, reports UNB.

Another 56 schemes were implemented in Sadar, Hatia and Companiganj thana spending 137 tons of wheat during the period under the second phase of the programme, official sources said.

Meanwhile, some 274 schemes were implemented in Sadar, Begumganj, Chatkhil, Senbag and Hatia thanas utilising 595 tons of wheat under the special test relief programme.

The schemes included re-

pair of different rural roads, clearing of bushes, repair and reconstruction of mosques and madrasahs.

A total of 198 schemes were implemented in six thanas of the districts with the allocation of 2,680 tons of wheat for construction of rural kutcha roads in another programme.

Some 100 tons of wheat were spent for execution of 59 schemes of small embankments in four thanas of the district for IRR-Boro cultivation during the same fiscal under TR programme.

Another 30 schemes were implemented in Sadar Hatia and Companiganj thanas utilising 410 tons of wheat in the second phase of the programme.

# Two killed in wall collapse

NARSINGDI, July 1: Two labourers were killed and seven others injured when a concrete wall collapsed on them at village Kashipur in paurasava of Sadar thana Saturday, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said Shaiful Islam, 30, and Bazlur Rahman, 28, — enlisted workers of Narsingdi Pourasava — died on the spot when a wall fell on them at 4:30 pm.

Witnesses said the mishap occurred when the labourers of pourasava were digging earth for constructing a drain at Kashipur village in Madhabkhal of the paurasava.

Critically injured labourers — Anul Haq, 20, Mannan, 26, Iman Ali, 35 and Ibrahim, 30 — were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and local clinics.

# Apex Club executives

COMILLA, July 1: An 11-member executive committee of the Apex Club for 1996-97 was elected here on June 26, reports UNB.

Syed Taslim Uddin Ahmed, A K M Nurul Afsar and Dr Mohammad Abul Kashem were elected as president, secretary and treasurer respectively.

The other officer-bearers are: Kamaluddin Ahmed, Abdul Aziz Masum, Yakub Chowdhury, Mujibur Rahman, Taslim Ahmed Chowdhury Sankaral Dey, Nazrul Islam Babul, Abdur Rouf Chowdhury.

Meanwhile, a 33-member committee has been formed with Kazi Nazmus Sa'adat, A K M Nurul Afsar and Mohammad Abul Kashem as chairman, secretary and treasurer respectively for holding the national convention '97 of the Apex International in Comilla.

# Eye camp held in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent CHUADANGA, July 1: A seven-day long eye camp organised by the Lions Club of Kushtia was held at Ershadpur Academy High School here recently.

A total of 125 eye patients were operated upon in the eye camp while 1057 eye patients were given treatment free of cost.

Eye specialist Dr Ahdhir Kumar Paul of Chuadanga Sadar Hospital conducted the operation. He was assisted by Dr Fazlul Hoque, Dr Monjurul Islam and Dr. Golam Zakaria Khaid.

On the concluding day, the operated eye patients were given medicine and spectacles.

# Lightning kills one in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent CHUADANGA, July 1: A young housewife was killed when a lightning struck her at village Uzirpur under Damurhuda thana of the district in the afternoon on June 25.

The victim was identified as Serunessa, 25, wife of Jahar Ali.

She along with her sister-in-law was going to her father's house at Digpara. The lightning struck her when they reached the old mosque of the village. She died on the spot while her companion sustained injuries.

# FPAB workshop held in Khulna

KHULNA, July 1: A day-long workshop on the role of journalists in family planning was held here on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) organised the workshop.

Deputy Commissioner of Khulna Itteker Ahmed inaugurated the workshop which was presided over by president of FPAB Khulna branch Enayet Ali.

A total of 32 journalists from different national and local newspapers, agency and media from Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira districts participated in the course.

# LP gas crisis hits Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, July 1: The unabated crisis of liquid petroleum (LP) gas in Cox's Bazar town and its adjoining areas is causing tremendous suffering to the consumers.

At present per cylinder of LP gas is sold by the dealers between Taka 400 and Tk 450 as against its actual price at Taka 225. LP gas crisis has turned worst all over the district due to short supply and the alleged malpractice of a section of traders in collaboration with the dealers.

Due to abnormal rise of the price of the consumers the skyrocketed demands of LP gas is experienced elsewhere across the district and taking this opportunity, the dealers and the traders have been earning a lot of amount by selling the gas at exorbitant rates in black markets, it is alleged.

Users of LP gas have been forced to use fire wood or kerosene oil as fuel. Consequently, the price of fuel wood has risen sharply. The in-

creased demand has led to widespread felling of trees adding to possible ecological imbalance in the area.

Local dealers said the supply of LP gas had been increasing day by day because other fuels were more costly and hazardous. Some dealers are allegedly taking advantages of the crisis and selling LP gas at higher prices.

There are four dealers in the town areas and they are getting (supply) 4,500 LP gas cylinders every month.

LP gas crisis started in Cox's Bazar since first week of June. Sometimes the gas cylinders are not available even in the black markets due to short supply by the companies concerned to the utter sufferings of the consumers in general.

According to the local dealers and the representatives of different companies, there are huge sets of gas ovens imported from India under OGL and sold to the consumers at cheaper rates some

time back.

Local people said the gas dealers were maintaining cautious steps and sometimes avoiding to attend their shops fearing assault by the consumers.

Officials said the normal demand for LP gas in the district is about 8,000 to 10,000 cylinders per month while the supply is about 2,000 cylinders.

Meanwhile, many private importers have imported a huge quantity of empty gas cylinders following Open General Licence (OGL) and sold them off to the general people.

And these people are now rushing to the LP gas dealers to get their cylinders filled by exchanging the empty ones.

"The problem created in a way that the companies are now unable to supply the cylinders," said a company staff. Taking advantage of the crisis, some dishonest dealers are now charging higher prices than that of the normal rates, he added.

# Ganges, Brahmaputra rise at all points

Monsoon is active all over the country. Light to heavy rainfall has been recorded at all places over the Brahmaputra and the Ganges basins and light to moderately heavy fall at most places over the Meghna and the south eastern hill basins during the 24 hours ending at 6 pm Sunday, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, flood forecasting centre said, the Brahmaputra and the Ganges continued to further rise at all points. Rivers in the Meghna and the south eastern hill basins registered rise and fall. All the rivers are flowing below their respective danger levels. The details of the basin reports are as follows:

The Brahmaputra marked further rise by 24 cm at Noonkhawa, 31 cm at Chilvari, 23 cm at Bahadurabad, 29 cm at Sirajganj and by 47 cm at Aricha. The Dharla recorded further rise by 23 cm at Kurigram. The Teesta registered rise by 14 cm at Dalai while it recorded fall by 8 cm at Kaulnia. The Old Brahmaputra also recorded further rise by 14 cm at Jamalpur and by 51 cm at Mymensingh. The Buriganga at Dhaka and the Lakhya at Naranganj recorded rise by 25 cm and 28 cm respectively. The Turag recorded further rise by 16 cm at Mirpur while it remained steady at Tongi. The Kaliganga at Taraghat also recorded sharp rise by 84 cm. However, all the rivers in this basin are flowing below their respective danger levels.

The Ganges recorded further rise by 33 cm at Pankha, 50 cm at Rajshahi, 63 cm at Hardinge bridge, 74 cm at Goalundo and by 37 cm at Bhanyakul. The Gorai recorded further rise by 49 cm at Gorai Rly Bridge. The Karatoa at Panchagarh remained steady while the Punarbhaba at Dinajpur marked fall by 13 cm. The Mahananda recorded further rise by 58 cm at Chhapainawabganj and the Jamuna at Naogaon also marked rise by 82 cm. The Kumar at Faridpur also recorded rise by 9 cm.

# BSF returns body of Abdur Rahman

From Our Correspondent RANGPUR, July 1: The body of Abdur Rahman, 25, who was killed in BSF firing on Saturday was returned Sunday.

He was killed by the Indians at Daibhanga under Rowmari thana when he along with other villagers resisted a BSF bid to kidnap some Bangladeshi women a flag meeting held at Rowmari yesterday between BSF and BDR officials signed an agreement under which the body was returned to Bangladesh.

Meanwhile two other Bangladeshi citizens — Afjar Rahman 18, and Jakir Hossain 22, both students of local schools, injured in firing by BSF are under treatment of the Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

# Patharghata lacks civic amenities

BARGUNA, July 1: Patharghata Pourashava of the district has been facing manifold problems affecting normal life since long, reports UNB.

Deplorable condition of the roads, inadequate street lights, absence of proper drainage system, lack of proper sanitary arrangements, mosquito menace and frequent power failure have become a common feature here.

The authorities seem reluctant to clean the roadside ditches filled with garbage making safe bed for mosquito breeding.

Most of the roads are narrow with cracks and potholes at many points. Besides, many street lights in the pourashava area have no valve turning the whole area into darkness after sunset giving rise to anti-social activities.

Acute shortage of accommodation is also a great problem because new houses are not constructed here to meet the needs of increasing number of the town dwellers due to price hike construction materials.

# Black smoke of vehicles polluting environment in Natore

NATORE, July 1: Emission of black smoke from the vehicles here has been polluting the environment, reports UNB.

Most of the vehicles that are plying in the town emit black smoke violating traffic rules and causing health hazards.

About 575 vehicles including buses, trucks and jeeps are plying on different routes of the small town every day also making the traffic congestion acute.

Local people alleged that the owners of the vehicles or the law enforcers so far took no measures to stop emission of black smoke which has been causing outbreak of various diseases.

Local physicians said black smoke is one of elements of high blood pressure, cancer, heart and other bronchial diseases. School going children are the worst sufferers.

Inhabitants of the town urged the concerned authorities to take necessary steps for preventing emission of black smoke to make the area pollution free.

# Bomang king cremated

BANDARBAN, July 1: The body of Bomang chief Raja Bahadur Manung Shew Prue Chowdhury was cremated Sunday at Rajdarbar crematory amid chanting of the sacred verses from the Tripitaka by hundreds of tribal and non-tribal assembled on the occasion, reports BSS.

State Minister for LGRD and Cooperative Alhaj Syed Abul Hossain who flew to Bandarban from Dhaka placed wreaths at the coffin of the late King on behalf of the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina followed by Bandarban local government council chairman Maung Kaya Ching on behalf of the chairmen of the hill districts.

A four-member delegation of Chittagong Hill Tracts National Co-ordination and Peace Council and leaders of various organisations and individuals also placed wreaths at the coffin as a mark of respect to the late King.

Defying incessant rain, tribal and non-tribal took the coffin to the Rajbaria by chariot and presented traditional tribal dance as a mark of respect to 14th King of Bomang circle. From there the body was taken to his family crematorium where he was cremated with due religious and royal honour.

# Sirajganj town dev project

SIRAJGANJ, July 1: The work on Sirajganj town development project is going on with the financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) reports UNB.

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) will implement the project under which roads of Sirajganj pourashava will be developed.

Work on Sher-e-Bangla Road has already been started. An estimated Tk 7.34 lakh will be spent to complete the construction of the road, of which 25 per cent work has already been completed.

Meanwhile, LGED is facing problem to implement the work on the roads from Sirajganj bazar to Bahirgola old rail station as slum dwellers occupied the both sides of the road. LGED Executive Engineer, however, told UNB that the work will be started next week after eviction of the slum dwellers.

# Two commit suicide in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, July 1: A housewife committed suicide at village Panchim Pirjipur in Bajitpur thana recently.

Police said, Mamata Khatun, 28, wife of Idris Ali allegedly swallowed poison in the evening for unknown reasons. The body was sent to the morgue of Kishoreganj sadar hospital.

In another incident, Abdus Sattar, 55, chairman of Hiliachia union parishad in Bajitpur thana hanged himself from the ceiling of his house on June 5. The cause behind suicide could not be known.

Two separate UD cases were registered with Bajitpur police station.

# Disclosed at seminar Mother, child care programmes show positive signs

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, July 1: A two-day Barisal and Khulna Divisional Seminar on 'Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 1993-94' was held at the auditorium of Kushtia Family Welfare Visitors' Training Institute (FWVTI) recently.

Kamruddin Mridha, Deputy Director, Kushtia Family Planning Department presided over the seminar while A.K.M. Rafiquzzaman, Director General of National Institute of Population, Observation and Research Training (NIPORT) was the chief guest.

AFM Serajul Haq, Deputy Commissioner, Kushtia and M.A. Taher, Director, Family Planning Department were special guests. Welcome speech was delivered by Miss Selina Begum, Principal FWVTI.

Rafiquzzaman, chief guest in his speech said that this survey reveals the progress of National Family Planning Mother and Child Health Care. Although we have achieved the target in 4th and 5th five

years National Planning on the subject but we should make our effort more forceful in future in the backdrop of past performances, he added. We have got various problems but we should find out those problems ourselves so that we do not feel the need of bringing advisers from other countries, he concluded.

Earlier key note paper, containing the result of Barisal and Khulna Divisions was presented by Asadur Rahman, Director, Family Planning, Khulna Division.

The aim of the seminar was discussed in detail by Dr. Ahmad Ali, Director (MIPORT), Research. Over hundred officials and employees of Family Planning, Mother and Child Health Care of Khulna and Barisal divisions took part in the 2 day National Seminar. The seminar was organised by MIPORT and FWVTI. Kushtia and necessary assistance was given by USAID, Macro International and the population council.

# 2 killed, 15 hurt in Sirajganj road accident

SIRAJGANJ, July 1: Two people were killed and 15 injured, five seriously, when a bus skidded off the Bogra-Nagarbari highway in Raiganj thana Saturday, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said the Nagarbari-bound over loaded bus plunged into a roadside ditch at Sahabganj, killing passenger Subaj Ali, 34, and Akbar Ali, 27, on the spot. Seriously wounded five were rushed to Raiganj than health complex.

Police seized the bus, the driver and helper fled. A case was filed in this connection.

# Arms recovered, three arrested in Chuadanga

From Our Correspondent CHUADANGA, July 1: Chuadanga thana police recovered one pipe gun and arrested three persons from local Raipara and Islampara on June 21.

The arrested are Moazzem of Raipara and Muktar and Khabir of Islampara.

Three hours before the arrest, Tk 10000 was looted from a shop at the Islampara. Police suspected them of having committed the robbery.

A case has been lodged with the Chuadanga police station.

# Int'l Day against Drug Abuse observed in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, July 1: Deputy Commissioner of Kushtia A F M Serajul Haq called upon the guardians and social workers to save the young generation from the effect of drug abuse by keeping vigilance on narcotics smugglers and users.

He was speaking at a discussion meeting held on Wednesday at Kushtia collectorate conference hall in observance of the International Day Against Drug Abuse organised by the department of district Narcotics control. The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for social awareness about drug abuse.

Sudip Kumar Lahiri, retired Prof of Kushtia Govt. University College, presented a key note paper. Dr Anwarul Karim, Principal, Kushtia Govt. University College, Mahfuzur Rahman ADC (General), Rotarian Bahul Amin also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier a colourful procession was brought out by the members of the Phul Kuri Jatio Shishu Kishore Central committee and the members of Rotary club of Kushtia West led by its president Shaikh Abdul Momin. The processionists paraded the main streets which ended at Kushtia collectorate premises.

# One killed in road accident

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, July 1: A 26 year old housewife was killed in an accident on Kishoreganj Bhairab road at Lokman Khan char in Kaliarchar thana recently.

Police said, a Kishoreganj-bound passenger bus ran over Jashna Rani, wife of Shakuntal Debnath, who died on the spot. The bus speed immediately after the accident.