



Partial view (L) of the inundated Bridge Road in Gaibandha town. Boat and rickshaws plying together on pavement road in Purbhara. — Star photo

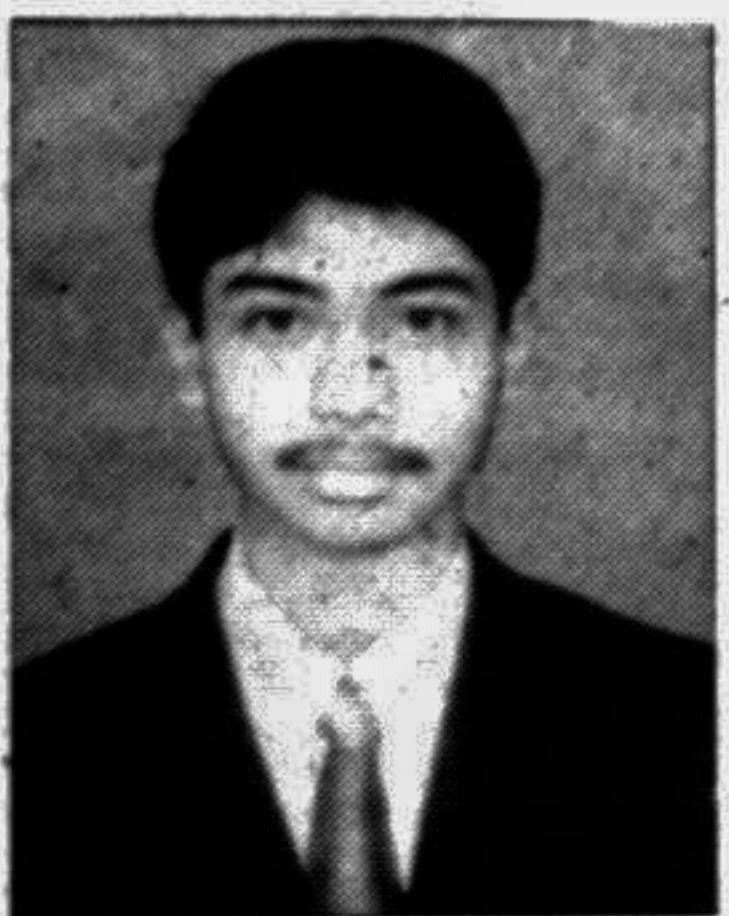
Development works worth Tk 11 cr completed at RU during last 5-year plan

From RU Correspondent
RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, July 17: A development work involving Tk 11 crore 8 lakh 87 thousand have been completed at Rajshahi University under last 5-year plan (1991-95) which ended in June 1995. Four new departments and one institute have been established under this Rajshahi University development project. The newly introduced departments are, Public Administration, Library and Information Science, Computer Science and Fine Arts, Institute of Biological Sciences is the only institute that was introduced under last four 5-year plan. The construction of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall and Begum Khaleida Zia Hall, extension of Administration building and Taposy Rabeya Hall, have also been completed under this development project.

On the other hand, two new institutes and two new departments would be set up and introduced respectively at Rajshahi University under the 5th five year plan (1995-2000). RU office sources said, Government changing the five year plan into 3 years plan allotted Tk 10 crore 5 lakh in this regard. From this amount under development and teaching programme two new departments namely Population Science and Human Resources Development, Genetics and Breeding and two new institutes viz Institute of Business Administration and Institute of Environmental Science would be established. Moreover, establishing a Institute of English Language and Institute of Education and research at Rajshahi University is also under active consideration of the authority subject to receiving fund.

Fake chemical importer

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, July 17: The Chittagong Customs House has found a 'fake chemical importer' who took delivery of most of the consignments by submitting forged documents. According to Customs sources, the Chittagong Customs Authority ordered an immediate investigation in to the matter and seizure of the rest of the consignments. Further details were not available.



Ashik wants to be a pilot

Ashik Noon who has secured star marks with 6 letters in the Dhaka Board's Science Group SSC examination this year, wants to be an aircraft pilot, says a press release.

His father, A K Firoz Noon is a noted politician and mother Momena Begum is a former headmistress.

Ashik got awards in drawings from Bangla Academy and Shishu Academy. As a child artist delegate he visited Japan, Thailand, Singapore and India. He has a keenness for invention and research in any field.

1993 BDR firing killed 5 in Jakiganj

Inquiry report not yet published

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, July 17: Neither the report on the judicial enquiry commission formed following the killing of five villagers by BDR firing three years ago has yet been published, nor the government has taken any step to implement the recommendations, though a long time has already passed.

It may be stated here that, on July 26 in the 1993, a group of BDR jawans from a nearby Border Out Post (BOP) went to the Telikhal embankment and opened fire on the villagers without any provocation. The villagers who from different adjoining areas earlier had gone there a short-while before the incident to the embankment attempting to save several thousand acres of land which face seasonal inundation every year. Four persons died on the spot while another succumbed to his injuries in the hospital.

The murders by BDR firing created much sensation in the region. The government on the next day formed a judicial enquiry commission with

Anwarul Haque, District and Sessions Judge of Kishoreganj as its Chairman and asked it to submit its report to the government by September '93 with recommendations.

The people of Jakiganj thana demanded for immediate publication of the report and also demanded for early execution of the recommendations. Several representations were placed before the authorities in this regard, but all in vain.

It may be stated here that, the swelling waters from the upper hilly areas across the Indian borders cause damage to the standing crops on thousands of acres of croplands in Jakiganj, Beanibazar, Biswanath and Balaganj thanas in Sylhet and considerable areas in the district of Sunamganj every year.

The situation goes abnormal when the hilly water cause breaches at points through the Kushiara Dyke constructed by the Water Development Board inundating large number of villages in different thanas.

Erosion in the rivers also

contribute to this situation every year. Almost all the starting points of the canals which start from the river Kushiara were blocked due to construction of embankments. These unplanned embankments though provided fishing facilities but blocked the way of the outlet of waters especially during the monsoon.

It leads to overflowing of the river on both sides. Besides, about 30 thousand acres of land in the low-lying areas have been suffering very much from stagnancy of waters. Of this, 15 thousand acres of land was totally unfit for cultivation. The rest areas also go under water almost every year as the surface water can not roll down to the rivers due to the embankments.

Every year, additional lands are becoming uncultivable as the stagnancy of water has been extending to the adjacent lands.

Common farmers prefer opening of the entry points of the embankments to save their lands from the clutches of frequent floods. Due to this, they have to face occasional clashes

Wife strangulated to death

From Our Correspondent
FARIDPUR, July 17: Husband and his second wife allegedly killed the first wife in Nagarkanda thana recently. It is reported that Nirumia, 35, of village Chandibardi under Nagarkanda thana had two wives who were at daggers drawn and quarreled too often.

On the day of incident, the two wives were reportedly engaged in bitter quarrel throwing abuses to each other in filthy languages. At one stage of the quarrel husband Nirumia and his second wife fell upon the first wife Aytunnessa, 30, and strangulated her to death.



PABNA: Bags containing fertilisers being removed from godowns at Nagorbari ferryghat badly affected by flood and severe erosion. — Star photo

40,000 families shelterless due to erosion

About two lakh people leading miserable lives in Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, July 17: About two lakh people of different char areas in seven thanas of the district who were rendered homeless by the continued river erosions have been living inhuman lives.

The erosion affected unions are: Nowarpara, Chinduli, Shapdari, Belgassa, Kulkandi, Golarchar, Charguali unions in Islampur thana, Bahadurabad, Perrarampur unions in Dewanganj thana, Balijuri, Jarkata, Pakardah unions in Madarganj thana, and some areas of sadar thana.

These homeless people took shelter on flood control embankments after their homesteads were razed or washed away by gradual erosion over the last five years.

A few of victims have erected slums and the rest are virtually living under the open sky.

Unofficial source said at least 12000 kutcha houses were totally damaged during the last five years by the flood and erosion in different char areas rendering about 40,000 families shelterless.

Different non-government organisations (NGOs) distributed house-building materials among the affected families and the other families are still remaining homeless.

In Dewanganj thana all the people of 42 villages have been rendered homeless during the floods and erosion. Flood waters still remain stagnant in some places bringing farming to a standstill in 200 villages. Eighty per cent people of these villages, who are agricultural labourers, were unemployed.

Dacoits fire on police in Ctg: Two injured

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, July 17: Two police constables received bullet injuries when armed dacoits fired on a police patrol team recently at Chowdhurypara under Chaudhaga thana in the city here.

They are identified as Jasim Uddin and Jamal Uddin. They were admitted into Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Police said the dacoits opened fire when the patrol team challenged them. But the dacoits immediately fled from the scene, police said.

Brilliant students, various organisations awarded Tk 6 lakh

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, July 17: Nawabganj education, culture, health and games development trust distributed 6 lakh 27 thousand taka among the brilliant students and educational, cultural and social welfare organisations during the last four years.

The trust gave 42 thousand taka to 21 brilliant students, 5 lakh 73 thousand taka to various educational, cultural and social welfare institutions and organisations, 12 thousand taka to the proficient people in the fields of sports, culture and education and 1 lakh 60 thousand taka to the Diabetic Association.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Female students brought out a procession demanding new dormitories. — Star photo

Seminar on 'effects of changing environment'

Plants, animals increasingly disappearing due to expanding population

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, July 17: Prof M Eusuf Ali, Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University has said due to adverse effect of Farakka Barrage a gradual but alarming environmental changes was visible in the northern region of the country. He was addressing at a seminar titled — 'Effects of Changing Environment on Northern Region of Bangladesh' organised by Bangladesh Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) Rajshahi Chapter recently.

Prof M Altaf Hussain, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University and President of BAAS local chapter presented the keynote paper at the seminar. Prof Altaf in his paper said that, plants and animals in the region increasingly disappearing due to expanding human population, deforestation, severe droughts and poverty.

A considerable area, about 29 per cent of net cultivable area has been brought under flood control and drainage (FCD) projects and FCD-irrigation (FCDI) projects which drastically changed the inland water aquatic environment both quantitatively and qualitatively, adversely affecting habitat conditions of the open water fish, other aquatic fauna and flora.

As a result, inland open water fishery production has been steadily declining, he

added. The climatic condition of our country is also changing due to green house effects, like facing high temperature, less rainfall, frequent cyclone, severe drought etc.

Prof Altaf said that global climatic changes may occur in the 1st quarter of the 21st century. He also said that funnel shaped coastal areas of Bangladesh and its world famous mangrove forest may submerge completely under saline water and one third of our economic activities along with people and ecosystem will be affected.

The key-note speaker Prof. Altaf Hussain in his concluding speech that due to adverse effects of Farakka barrage and perspective of changing environment like water scarcity, untimely and less rainfall, untimely flood caused the following:

- Fish production reduced in the natural water — including Hilsa and others.
- reproduction of aquatic-economic species hampered.
- house construction materials (thatched grass, bamboos, etc) (People used bricks for that, trees) are reduced in number.
- Sudden high-flood taking place due to siltation of river banks (effect of river dam).
- Wetland converted into agriculture lands.
- Production of agriculture

crops excess in few HYV is decreasing.

• Air, water, land pollution and human health hazards, are taking place gradually. And domestic animals products (milk, meat, skin etc.) are decreasing wild animals (birds, mammals, amphibians etc.) are reducing for distraction of environment. And ponds are converted into swamps and then agriculture land.

The seminar also took a series of recommendations to maintain the sustainability of biodiversity viz a viz, plant conservation, reafforestation to increase multi-species grass land and high trees forest, implementation of laws for forest, grass land and wild life protection. Fuel supply must be granted by using natural gas, solar energy, biogas, mineral energy, hydro-electricity, atomic energy, introducing improved cooker etc.

Killing of wild birds and animals should be protected through international laws. Wet land should be used for integrated aquaculture model with less emphasis on agriculture. Flood water and rain water conservation is needed. Which can be possible through land use policy, cluster village on the bank of the union level surface water should be reserved. Land and water use policy must be adopted (need vertical

expansion than horizontal).

The speakers concluded that regional exploitation of this northern areas of Bangladesh is necessary to maintain sustainability of biodiversity and to keep the environment free from any crisis. Seek help from all sectors like national regional and international level and cooperation of scientists, social scientists, economists, educated persons for management of socio-economic environmental sustainability.

Wife, alleged lover chopped to death

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, July 17: Two persons were chopped to death and another two were injured following an alleged illegal love affair tussle at Dhawa village under Bhandaria thana of Pirojpur district in broad daylight last week.

Police and witnesses said, one Mosarraf Khan, a rickshaw puller chopped his wife Lucky, 21, and her alleged lover, Abul Kalam, 24, to death when he came to know that his wife had developed illegal love affair with Abul Kalam, a distant relation of Mosarraf.

Another two, Selina Akhtar, 17 and Abdul Kader, 35, — the victim's neighbours — were also injured when they tried to resist Mosarraf during the incident.

Soon after the incident, villagers caught Mosarraf when he tried to escape from the scene. They handed him over to police.

Selina Akhtar was admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College hospital in a critical condition. A case was filed with Bhandaria thana.

Jamalpur-Bahadurabad ghat rail link may be cut off

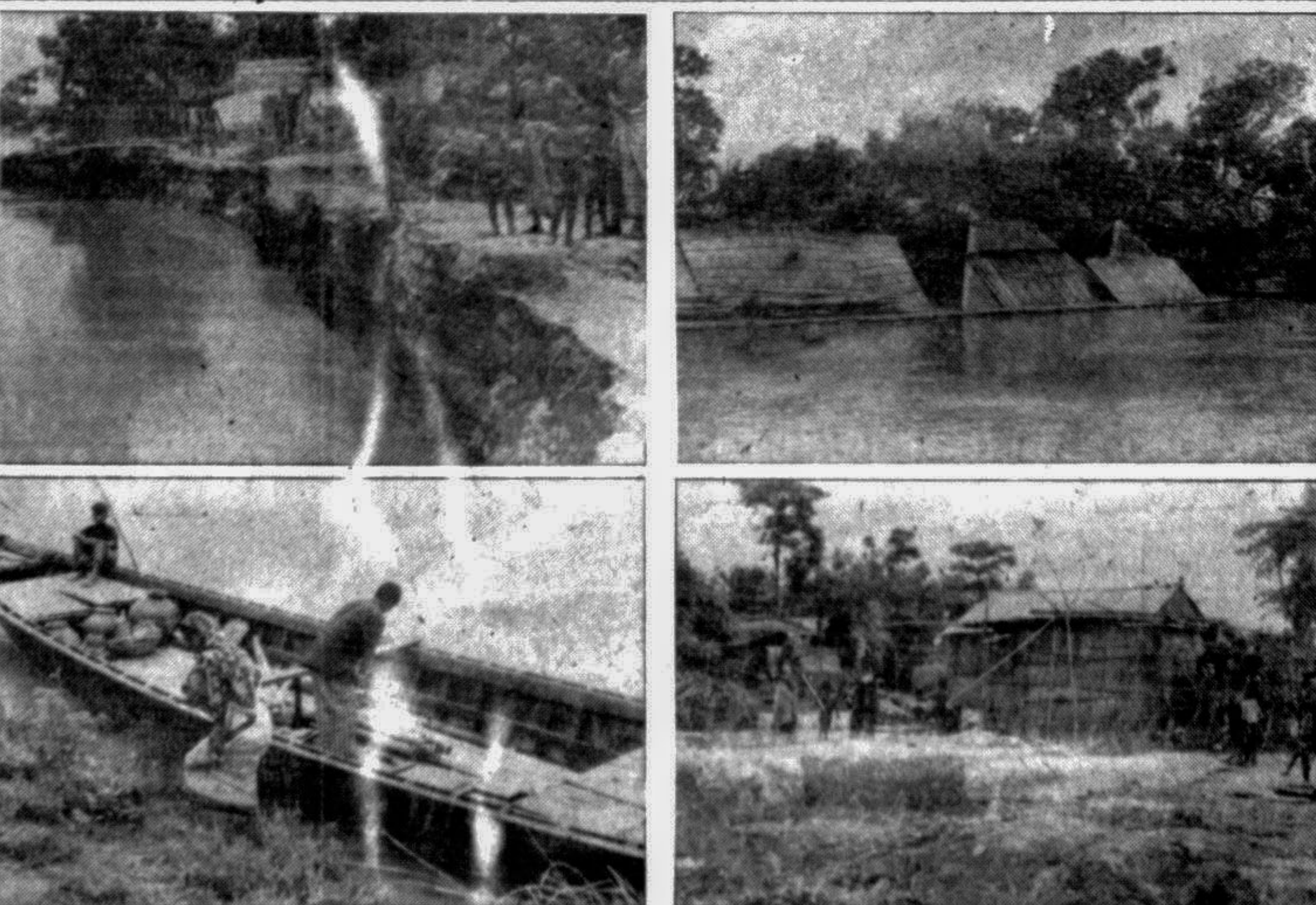
From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, July 17: the rail communication between Jamalpur-Bahadurabad ghat and Jamalpur-Jagannathganj ghat has been disrupted due to inundation by flood water on rail lines in different places on these route during the last 24 hours, according to official sources. The rail communication is likely to be suspended any time today, sources said.

The flood affected people are suffering from shortage of

medicine, and drinking water. About 2,000 tube-wells has gone under two to eight feet deep water. Several hundred people have shelter on the roof of houses and trees in rural areas of the district.

Reliable sources said that two lakh maund of paddy, wheat, onion were washed away by the flood. About 25,000 poultry, cattle head were missing in the affected areas.



TANGAIL: Kakua channel a tributary of Jamuna attack (top left) Kakua char village areas. In the same village (top right) victims moving to safer place dismantling their ten-shed houses. An erosion hit family in Khandokar Para of Gobindadash Union (bottom left) on way for shelter. Houses being dismantled in a village of Bhupur thana by a number of families living next to Jamuna river. — Star photos by Manirul Islam Manik



SYLHET: Professor Bahauddin Zakaria, president, Family Planning Association Sylhet unit and Waziruddin Khan, MP president, Central Committee speaking at the concluding function of a 3-day workshop held here recently. — Star photo