

From Jan-May this yr in Bandarban

Malaria, diarrhoea claim 52 lives, more than 20,000 attacked

BANDARBUN, Aug 10: Malaria and diarrhoea have been assuming a serious proportion in the district taking a toll of 52 lives and attacked over one lakh people during the last seven months from January to July this year, headmen of the Mauzas, chairmen of union parishes and local leaders alleged.

According to official statistics, malaria and diarrhoea have claimed 52 lives and attacked 20,512 people from January-May 1996.

Variation exists in the statistics of malaria and diarrhoeal death as well as attack as majority of the patients could neither seek treatment in the hospitals nor inform the authority of their ailment due to bad communication, inaccessibility and lack of motivation as well as proper monitoring, an officer from the civil surgeon office said.

Despite all the sincere intentions, it has become difficult to contain the deadly disease, malaria, in the hill district of Bandarban, one of the 'malaria high risk zone' in the country due to shortage of medical professionalists, scarcity of medicine, constraint of fund, inconvenience in communication as well as other related factors," Dr Ahmed Kabir, who took over the responsibility of the Civil Surgeon of Bandarban hill district recently, told The Daily Star early this week, while detailing the reason for the continued outbreak of malaria in the district.

Two alleged dacoits arrested

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Aug 10: A minor boy drowned in a pond at village Jhatiapara in Karimganj thana on August 3.

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Aug 10: Two alleged dacoits were robbed by the police after they conspired a rail in Ashutaka-Manikpur village of Karimganj thana last week.

Four govt colleges beset with problems

From Our Correspondent BARISAL, Aug 10: Four government colleges of the district are now beset with manifold problems including shortage of teaching staff, reports UNB.

Government Barisal College is also running with shortage of 12 teachers — two Associate Professors and 10 lecturers.

Posts of some 60 teachers are now lying vacant at Government Brojomohon University College, Barisal Government College, Government Syed Hatem Ali College and Government Womens College.

Twenty five posts of teachers at degree and HSC levels also fell vacant since long. Meanwhile, there is no principal in the college as the newly appointed principal could not take over charge in the face of student protest.

office does not at all tally with those received from the public representatives, social workers and relatives of the victims. It was gathered.

According to official sources, malaria claimed 19 lives in Bandarban sadar thana, the best medically privileged one, out of seven thanas of the district, while the death figure recorded there was 'nil' against the worst malaria affected and most inaccessible Thanchi thana in the district during January-May this year.

The official statistic available with the office of the Civil Surgeon shows that malaria claimed only two lives in Ruma thana of the district during January-May this year while local leaders and relations of the victims confidently produced the evidences to the effect that nine persons died of malaria in the month of May last alone in Ruma thana.

Cerebral malaria, attack of which is apparently, being observed in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region as the definite cause of life, has been claiming lives within 24-48 hours of attack. Malaria so far attacked 3,274 people in Naingkhongchhari, 2,861 in sadar thana, 2,484 in Akhadam thana, 2,182 in Ruma thana, 1,007 in Thanchi thana and the highest as well as the lowest numbers of people in Lama and Roangchhari thana at 7,874 and 841 respectively, official statistic says.

Above 60 per cent malaria-cured people are being attacked with jaundice and hepatitis, immediately after recovery from the former disease, sufferers said.

In order to contain malaria, 2,5163 mosquito-nets were made medicated by mixing with dintamethrin, an anti-malaria liquid drug and distributed for use in hospitals, police-lines, security forces' barracks and a few rural areas in May, 1995 formally. As no survey on using of medicated mosquito-nets was conducted by the health department, the result yielded by it is yet to be known.

As no steps to fill up the vacant posts of physicians in CHT region have yet been taken up, the network of rendering of medicare services has been decreasing day by day, pushing the down-trodden people of the insurgency-battered region to a definite unexpected death being untreated and untreated, local leaders alleged. The gradual fall in medicare services in the government sectors started with vesting of Health Department under the Local Government Councils in CHT in the second half of June, 1989, the allegation added.

Over 62 per cent post of physicians in the three hill districts of Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachhari have been lying vacant for a long period.

According to official sources, 102 physicians have been working in 25 thana health complexes along with the three sadar hospitals in three district headquarters as against 267 sanctioned posts of physicians.

Aheading 49 posts of physicians lying vacant, 18 doctors have been attending the patients in seven thana health complexes and one sadar hospital in Bandarban district headquarters with extreme difficulties. Eight doctors, who were posted here, have allegedly been keeping themselves absent from their place of posting unauthorisedly, reportedly for higher training.

According to set-up, there are 68 sanctioned posts of doctors in all the health institutions including union health centres in the district.

Doctor in the important post like Civil Surgeon has been changed twice in six months with the latest change in the last month. Normally, a Civil Surgeon looks after and monitor the day to day medicare activities in the district in addition to his administrative activity.

Two specialist physicians have been serving here as against four for the last five years, sources said. Ruma and Thanchi thana health complexes have been experiencing with 'no doctor taste' very regularly for the last few years.

The hapless people of this district are allegedly being blessed with the services of the doctors in 'dream' as the eighteen working doctors are supposed to attend about twelve people in a minute per head.

No ambulances are yet provided to five thana health complexes in the district while river-crafts are also yet to be provided to the riverine inaccessible thanas to carry the emergency patients to the health complexes.

From CHT Correspondent

concerned shows a shipment to be 10 tons, but in reality, it's double.

This side of the illegal traders aren't always at the receiving end. They are also active in sending electronic goods, spare parts of watches and clocks to Indian traders at India Hill while Bangladesh smugglers get automobile parts in exchange.

On the face of tighter security, illegal channeling of many items across the border has been curbed, but Indian sarrees and fabrics are still in saffron situation as before which is taking a heavy toll on the country's textile industry.

Meanwhile the informed circle in Joypurhat thinks that the Anti-smuggling Task Force is doing a noteworthy job, but they are failing to break the smugglers' chain-of-form. They presume the sudden decline in smuggling is a for-the-time-being phenomenon.

According to local enthusiasts, who are vocal against illegal bode-trade, they have witnessed a few arrests made — but the majority of across-the-border business people are allegedly being left scot-free for reasons known otherwise. These still-to-be-arrested traders — who apparently have a strong ghetto — are well-known to all, and the law enforcers are overlooking them, it was alleged by many.

Smuggling by definition takes place across the border since it's out of one at the hands of customs officials is 'so-called' portion of the incoming goods go 'undocumented', informed the local sources. For example, while the estimate in black and white by the authority

district allegedly without any blood test and pathological examination as there are no pathological technicians are posted there, though the thana health complexes got the requisite laboratory apparatus, sufferers alleged.

Simultaneously, the similar scenario on the rendering of medicare services to the distress people of the hill districts of Rangamati and Khagrachhari by the government agencies has long been prevailing, which started developing agitation among the people this region, Shah Newaz Babu, president Rangamati Hill District unit of Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal alleged. Only 48 doctors have been working in ten thana health complexes and a 100-bed so-called modern hospital at the district headquarters of Rangamati hill district as well as a few union health centres as against of 114 sanctioned posts of doctors. To be mothers are getting no treatment as there is no gynecologist employed in this district for the last four years, while three specialists are employed here out of seven in the district.

In eight thana health complexes and a sadar hospital at the district headquarters of Khagrachhari hill district 34 doctors have been serving against 85 posts of doctors. No steps have allegedly been initiated to recruit 51 doctors including four specialists in the district, sufferers alleged.

To protect the distress people of this region from the deadly disease malaria and ensure their health services, the sufferers sought the early steps of the authority to immediately sort out the longstanding problems in the local health sectors.

In 1995-96 FY Record number of cargo handled at Mongla Port

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 10: A total of 28 lakh 39 thousand metric tons of cargos were handled at Mongla Port from the first day of July, 1995 to June 30, 1996. It is an all time record, said a source of Mongla Port authority.

The source further said that during 1994-95 fiscal the port handled 28,26,000 metric tons of cargos which means that the operational activities made progress during the following financial year. The source further said that a total of 24 lakh 43 thousand metric tons of imported goods were unloaded and three lakh ninety six thousand metric tons of exportable goods loaded at the port during the last fiscal year marking the record quantity of cargoes handled.

But during 1994-95 fiscal year 21 lakh 20 thousand metric tons of imported goods were unloaded while 7,06,000 metric tons loaded.

Besides, 18,820 containers were handled during the year 1995-96 which was 16,039 during the fiscal year 1994-95.

According to Mongla Port authority, a total of Tk 63 crore six lakh was earned as revenue during last financial year. Out of this, a total of 44 crore and 56 crore taka was spent for different purposes. So, the total amount of net profit is over 17 crore taka, the source added.

But the total amount of revenue earned during the 1994-95 fiscal year was 61,96,94,000 while Tk 41 crore 64 lakh and 55,000 were spent for port development.

Motor launch workers go on strike in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 10: Workers of motor launches plying on all routes of south Khulna have gone on strike from Thursday morning for indefinite period in protest against police harassment and arrest of eight employees for interrogation in connection with a theft case recorded with Koira thana on Tuesday last.

According to Koira thana police, a sum of Tk 5,34,500 deposited with the ticket clerk of motor launch Murshid by some fish traders on way to Khulna from Koira was allegedly misappropriated. The fish traders after reaching Khulna asked for the money, but the ticket clerk refused to return it.

Manikganj JCD demands removal of ASP

From Our Correspondent

MANIKGANJ, Aug 10 JCD activists of Manikganj brought out a procession today demanding removal of the ASP, Manikganj circle.

They alleged that ASP Sanaulah works in favour of a certain political party.

They also called for a half-day hartal in Manikganj on Saturday.

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 10: Cooking gas crisis in Chapainawabganj has become acute. The consumers of gas of the district have been suffering a lot from the crisis of gas for more than a year. This crisis allegedly created by the dealers was protested by the Gas Cylinder Buyers' Association. The leaders of the Association demanded the cancellation of the dealership of the 5 gas dealers of the district recently at a press conference arranged by them at Chapainawabganj Press Club.

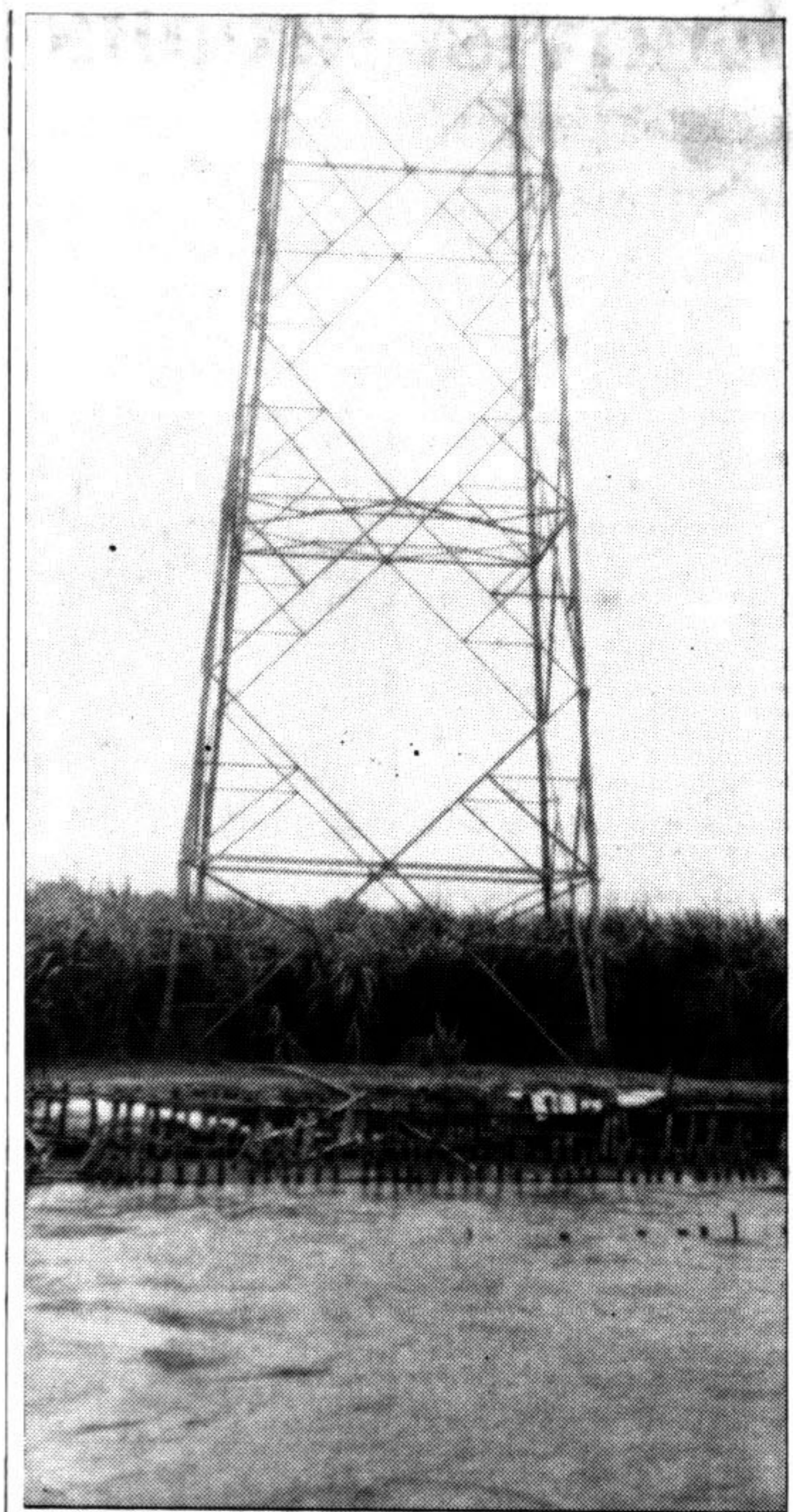
It is known, five dealers of the district sell gas cylinders. Taking the advantage of gas crisis during the last one year they had been selling each cylinder at 350 to 500 taka. When ever demanded by the buyers to sell the cylinders at the actual price the dealers used to harass them and would not supply them any cylinder.

At this, in February the buyers formed an association and protested these irregularities and harassment by the dealers. At the formation of the Buyers Association the dealer almost stopped supplying cylinders to the ordinary customers and began to sell cylinders secretly

at the previous high rates to the selected customers who were supposed not to protest it.

On April 11, ADC Nawabganj on behalf of the district administration called on a meeting at the conference room of DC with the participation of 5 gas dealers, the leaders of the buyers association and some elites of the district. In the meeting it was resolved that cards would be given to the registered cylinder-owners and cylinders would be supplied at first to those who in the meantime deposited their cylinders to the dealers and then to those who had been registered by the Association. It was also resolved that a proper seriality would be maintained.

The leaders of the Association, in a press conference recently alleged that violating the decision of the meeting the dealers still continue selling the cylinders in the black market. So they demanded immediate cancellation of the dealership of all the 5 dealers. They also warned to launch a greater movement if the problem was not solved immediately.



SHERPUR: Erosion of river Brahmaputra at Sherpur ferry ghat threatens the 33 KV power tower of PDB. — Star photo

Chandpur hospital beset with problems

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Aug 10: The 50-bed Chandpur district hospital is beset with manifold problems including shortage of specialists, physicians, nurses, staff, accommodation, medicine and absence of children ward and blood bank. The hospital was established during British period, at present the existing beds of the hospital can meet only twenty per cent requirement of the patients. Most of the cots and bed sheets have become worn. Out and these are rarely replaced by new ones, patients alleged.

The post of consultants of medicine and surgery is vacant for long. There is no separate children ward in the hospital, so child patients are admitted in the general ward. In the absence of blood bank, the patients have to collect blood from outside. Sometimes blood collected from outside is found contaminated. Sometimes patients in critical condition die as blood cannot be provided in due time. Scarcity of life saving drugs has posed a great problem. Poor patients are the worst sufferer as they can not afford to purchase medicine from the markets. The diet supplied to the patients is also not up to the mark, the hospital patients complained. There is no proper arrangement for major operation in the hospital. The operation theatre is accommodated in a small room. There is a lack of modern equipments. Due to lack of seats many patients are given accommodation in the floor and verandah of the hospital.

There is only one ambulance in the hospital which remains out of order. The staff and nurses are insufficient. There is no specialist for ENT, medicine, skin diseases. The people have urged the government to modernise the hospital into a hundred bed hospital. So that the problems of hospitals can be solved.

Torrential rain floods 35 villages in Jessore

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Aug 10: Over 35 villagers under 10 unions of Keshabpur, Monirampur and Obhainager thanas in the district, have been inundated in flash flood, triggered by torrential rains adversely affecting two lakh inhabitants of the area recently, according to source.

Reports received here from local thana administration office, say that in Keshabpur thana 28 villages in seven unions including Mongolkot, Keshabpur-part, Pajia Sulalakti, Gaurighana, Biddanundakati and Majidpur unions out of a total of nine unions, have gone under water. The inhabitants in the affected area remain stranded. All roads and communications connecting the main land have been snapped. All their economic activities have come to a standstill giving to various problems including shelter food and medical aid.

When contacted the Project Implementation Officer (PIO) Keshabpur, Anisur Rahman, told that entire southern portion of Keshabpur thana is completely submerged and people of this area are marooned, seeking help from outside to survive the deteriorating situation.

He also informed that minister for education A S H K Sadek has visited the affected areas to see things for himself and find out a permanent solution to end the disaster.

When asked whether any sort of relief materials have been extended to these flood affected people, District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (DRRO) Abdur Rob, told The Daily Star that no relief could be arranged for them so far due to shortage of materials in the godown.

In this connection, he further informed that Deputy Commissioners, Jessore, has meanwhile, taken up the matter with the ministry concerned for immediate supply of relief goods in sufficient quantity to tackle the situation. They were waiting for the response. He said that at the moment, there was only 10 metric tons of wheat at disposal of DRRO, Jessore. No loss of life was reported yet.

Crime rate on decrease in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 10: A sense of relief has been returned in the public minds of the district following the decrease in criminal and terrorist activities, reports UNB.

Police sources said during the month of July two incidents of murder, five thefts and two dacoities were committed in nine thanas of the district which were negligible than that of the previous month.

Following the police hunt and arrest of criminals the criminal activities and political clashes have decreased to a great extent.

Meanwhile, police arrested Abdul Kader, a notorious terrorist of Mahmud Mohalla in the town on August 3. They also arrested Naru of Dhanagara, who had been associated for long with smuggling and collection of tolls from train passengers.

Police, however, said, most of the criminals who are being set free from the court again engage themselves in criminal activities causing deterioration of law and order situation.

Fund shortages may hamper afforestation plan in Jhenidah

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, Aug 10: Afforestation programme is likely to be hampered in Jhenidah district for want of fund, it is apprehended.

According to reports, Jhenidah has no forest area in the district. Social afforestation programme was started in the district by forest department and some non-government organisations (NGOs). However, no NGO could start the programme as they were not in a position to receive fund under World Food Project (WFP) this year, the district forest department sources said.

The district forest department produced 50,000 saplings this year. The department was able to produce 2,50,000 saplings last year.

When contacted the Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF), Jhenidah, he acknowledged the fact saying that they could not produce rest of the targeted 2,00,000 saplings as they could not get the approval for new schemes.

ACF told that only 52,000 saplings were raised from six nurseries including two central nurseries in six thanas of the district this year.



JHENIDAH: Trees planted by district forest department by the side of Jhenidah-Magura Highway under the social afforestation programme. — Star photo

Youngman stabbed in Gopalganj

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Aug 10: Anisur Rahman Pitar, 22, a degree student of Gopalganj Government Bangabandhu College and son of former chairman of Gopalganj pourashava Hafizur Rahman (Pala Mia) was stabbed by some youngmen of the town recently.

Anisur Rahman was taking tea in a shop with his friends at Monohar Patta, when a group of youngmen stabbed him. He was seriously injured and was admitted to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

A case has been registered with Gopalganj police in this connection.