

Four children kidnapped in a week in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent KUSHITIA, Aug 12: Kidnapping of children has increased recently in Kushtia creating panic among the town dwellers.

Four children have been kidnapped during last one week, it was learnt from police sources.

On August 1, Lata, 7, and Hero, 5, both students of police line school were kidnapped on way back from school. Their mother, who has been divorced recently was living with these two children in a very poor condition could not get any trace of her children.

On August 3 Meskatul Arefin Sabuj, 10, a student of Class VI of Kushtia Zila School and son of Atiar Rahman of Chourhash village was kidnapped by some unknown persons when Sabuj was coming back from school near Bani Cinema Hall. Later he was rescued in Kumarkhali railway station.

On August 6 Shamim Bulbul son of Abul Khair Biswas of Kailsankarpur and a student of Class III of Adarsha Primary School has been kidnapped on way to school. No trace of the boy could be available till writing of this report. Guardians have urged upon the law enforcing agencies to take necessary steps in this respect.

51 meritorious students awarded stipend

From Our Correspondent KUSHITIA, Aug 12: Fifty-one poor and meritorious students of the district were awarded stipend from Chhatra Kallayan Foundation Fund recently.

A function was held at Kushtia Collectorate Conference Hall, Shamsul Karim, Additional Commissioner, Khulna Division and Founder President of Kushtia District Chhatra Kallayan Foundation spoke on the occasion as chief guest.

Presided over by AFM Serajul Huq, Deputy Commissioner and President of the Foundation, the stipend giving ceremony was also addressed by Kamrul Islam, General Secretary of the Foundation.

In his speech Founder President Shamsul Karim said that this institution was established by him with the generous help of U P Chairmen and other rich people of the district. This institution will pave the way for helping many meritorious students during their study and its an on going programme.

He also assured all kinds of help and cooperation in making the institution meaningful and urged upon all the wealthy people of the district to come forward to extend its area of service for the cause of education without which no nation can survive.

Deputy Commissioner in his address assured help and cooperation in order to fulfil the aspiration with which it was established.

Erosion of river Payra takes serious turn in Patuakhali

PATUAKHALI, Aug 12: With the rapid increase in water level of the river Payra, erosion has taken a serious turn and devoured a vast tract of cultivable land in Sundra Kalaikapur of the district, reports UNB.

Local people said, erosion by the river also intensified in Piprakhal area in Mirzaganj Thana rendering many people homeless.

In every monsoon erosion by the river takes serious turn but no preventive measures have yet been taken to save the areas, local people alleged.

Meanwhile, the river Bishkhali also engulfed a vast area along Gulishakhali, Tetulunia, Patkata, Bibichini, Betagi, Badar Khali, Tulatani, Roybag, Mollarahat, Shautala and Ramuna in the last few days.

The affected people urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to check the erosion.

Four fire arms deposited in Meherpur

MEHERPUR, Aug 12: Only four firearms were deposited here in response to general amnesty declared by the government till Friday, reports UNB.

Police sources informed a local leader of Workers Party and chairman of Mahajanpur Union Parishad surrendered a country-made rifle with five round of bullets. A Juba Dal worker of the town and two youngsters of Dhalia in Gangi thana also surrendered three same type rifles at the circuit house in presence of Khulna Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Police Superintendent and Poura Chairman.

Another report from Rangpur says Only one firearm was surrendered to the law enforcing agencies in the district till Saturday.

A young man of Nagormir-gonj village in Sadar thana surrendered the country-made pipe gun and ammunition.



MUNSHIGANJ: Dhaida Union of Louhajang thana was recently completely eroded by Padma river. Hundreds of erosion-hit people are searching for safer shelters. Local MP Mizanur Rahman Sinha is seen visiting a number of affected families. It is to be mentioned here that no government relief has yet been distributed among the victims. —Star photo

Over 50 pc land in tea gardens remain unused

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, Aug 12: Vast tracts of lands in the tea gardens have long been lying unused causing a huge losses to the gardens.

An official source referring to a recent survey report said, the total area of 158 tea gardens in the country stands at 11,456.74 hectares of this, only 39 per cent lands is being used as tea plantation area. The rest area covers low lying places, houses and other infrastructures, playgrounds, religious structures and fallow lands.

The total area includes, 65849.68 hectares in the 91 tea gardens in the district of Moulvibazar 21867.49 hectares in the 23 gardens in Habiganj, 11957.68 hectares in 20 gardens in the district of Sylhet.

81.60 hectares in one garden in Brahmanbaria, while 14,504.01 hectares in 22 gardens of Chittagong, and 301 hectares in the only tea garden of Rangamati, the source informed.

The total area of fallow lands in the tea gardens stands at 66679.10 hectares. It includes, 12463.12 hectares area fit for cultivating paddy, 6121.33 hectares for cultivation of other crops, 16829.56 hectares occupy forest, 3043.96 hectares of low lying places, 6705.59 hectares of playgrounds, cremation ground and graveyards while 8127.40 hectares have building, roads, lanes and others while 620.09 hectares have seed bed and nursery, the source added.

Besides, there are at least 12,768.65 hectares of land which can be used for tea plantation. There is bright prospect of high yield of tea leaves on these lands, the source viewed with a reference to the survey report.

Moreover, the rest of the fallow lands can also be brought under the cultivation of the different crops, fishing, poultry, tree plantation as well as extension of the tea gardens, the official said.

The garden authorities through bringing the tracts of fallow lands could yield a better result with a minimum endeavour, experts say. They could also ensure the availability of fodder through cultivating the quality grass on those

lands, he added.

The total population in the 158 tea gardens stands at 320 including the women and children. It includes, 91,996 registered labourers. There are 15,649 pucca structures, which are being used by the labourers as dwelling houses, while the number of kutcha houses numbered 43764. There are 56 small hospitals and 146 dispensaries in the tea garden areas. The number of beds for patients in the hospitals stands at 753 while the number of schools is 147, the reports say.

However, the housing medicare and other basic facilities for the poor labourers of the garden are meagre to meet their minimum requirement.

DC visits affected areas

Erosion, flood affected victims assured of more relief

From Our Correspondent KUSHITIA, Aug 12: The deputy commissioner, Kushtia visited the flood and erosion affected areas of Daulatpur thana yesterday. He visited Kachir Char, Churaikurinagar, Insafnagar, Mohammadpur, Sonatola, Khoribona, Alinagar, Islampur of Ramkrishnapur and Philipnagar union of Daulatpur thana, and talked to the affected people and expressed his sympathy with them.

The District Relief and Rehabilitation officer DC Shah, TNO Daulatpur Abdulhalil Bakil, Kudrat-e-Khoda Chairman Ramkrishnapur Union, Nurur Rahman chairman Philipnagar union and Khondakar Abul Kalam Azad General Secretary Daulatpur Press Club accompanied the Deputy Commissioner.

Twelve metric tons of wheat, 6 mt tons of rice and cash grant of Taka 60 thousand have so far been distributed among the affected people of Ramkrishnapur union while 2 mt tons of wheat, and 2 mt tons of rice and cash grant of Taka 10 thousand have been distributed among the affected people of Philipnagar union.

The Deputy Commissioner assured more help for the victims who have been suffering from various diseases due to non availability of drinking water, fire wood, kerosene oil, and other daily necessities. They have lost their hearth and homes and living a sub-human life and have been reduced to almost beggars, Secretary Daulatpur press club said.

Allegedly dacoit arrested in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Aug 12: Pakundia police arrested an alleged dacoit in a raid in Shaikhkhan village recently, it was reported.

Acting on a tip-off, a contingent of police force led by sub-inspector Mursheed Alam went to the village and nabbed Ramzan. He had been wanted in different cases like dacoity, cattle lifting etc., police sources said.

Old man dies in hospital

PATUAKHALI, Aug 12: An old man who was knocked down by a motorcycle succumbed at Barisal Medical College on August 3, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, a new rider hit Latif Miridha, 65, near Madina Masjid in Kalapara thana injuring him grievously. He was first admitted to the local thana health complex then shifted to the BMC in a critical condition.

A case was filed with the police.

Sugar mills by-product can be used to make white paper, alcohol

NATORE, Aug 12: Utilization of sugar mills by-products as raw materials in paper and distillery industries may help overcome the financial hardships of 13 sugar mills in northern region of the country, reports UNB.

The use of by-products may also help meet the existing acute scarcity of newsprint and white paper in the country, experts said.

According to experts, country's 17 sugar mills produce two main by-products — soup of molasses and cane-coir — which may be used as raw materials in distillery and paper industries respectively.

Sources informed that a huge quantity of soup molasses and cane-coir remain unsold in different mills every year in this region. Proper utilization of these by-products can bring economic solvency of the sugar industry, the sources added.

An official estimate shows that every year existing sugar mills produce about 8 to 10 lakh metric tons of cane-coir and at least one lakh mts of soup molasses.

Of the total amount of cane-coir, 80,000 mts are used in Pakshey Paper Mills — the only paper mills of the entire southern region of the country.

the sources said.

Sources alleged out of 17, North Bengal's 13 sugar mills have been facing a serious financial hardship for a long time due to faulty management and administration loopholes.

Soup molasses are used as raw materials in distillery industry to produce spirit and alcohol which can earn a huge foreign exchange due to its good demand.

Earlier with a view to exporting alcohol and spirit, five distilleries were set up in the country which could produce only 5,000 barrels of alcohol consuming some 52,000 mts

Old man dies in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent KISHOREGANJ, Aug 12: A 60-year-old man drowned when a boat capsized in the river near village Kursha in Nikli thana recently witnesses said.

The victim, Manik Banik of village Mahmudpur in Katladi thana was bound for Sarachar bazar from Katladi thana headquarters by a boat. The boat turned turtle when it was caught by gusty wind.

of molasses. But four distilleries could not produce the same in full capacity.

At present, they produce 40 per cent of their total capacity as they cannot export these products abroad due to lack government patronisation.

As a result, a huge quantity of molasses are lying unsold in different mills incurring a heavy loss, they informed.

It was also reported that some mills authorities had to sell it at a nominal price to local brokers a section of agents and touts under pressure from political and influential quarters.

Meanwhile, considering the deadlock prevailing in the industry, two organisations made a proposal to the concerned ministry for exporting their products to Nepal and Bhutan. But the proposal is yet to be finalised.

Economists and experts of the northern districts stressed the need for taking steps to set up subsidiary units of existing sugar mills like paper mills and distilleries to overcome the persisting financial crisis of the sugar mills and explore avenues to earn huge foreign exchange as well as to meet the prevailing country's acute paper crisis.



TANGAIL: Huge piles of pineapples are ready for loading on trucks as well as other transports for marketing in the capital city. —Star photo.

Residential housing crisis prevails in Chandpur

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Aug 12: The residential housing problem has become very critical during the last few years in the town. Almost half of the total population of town have no houses of their own.

According to Chandpur pourashava its population has risen to more than one lakh. But there are only twenty five per cent house holdings in the town. Out of the total about fifteen per cent buildings are government owned offices. Other fifteen per cent build-

ings cover school, college and other institutions. So only about seventy per cent building of the town are used for housing. Due to rise of population in the town the housing problem has become acute.

The house rent has increased about two folds in last two years. A flat of three rooms with kitchen was available at a rate of between Tk one thousand to one thousand five hundred. Now-a-days house rent of a flat has been raised to between Tk three thousand to four thousand per month. The main cause behind the rise of house rent is rapid growth of population in the town area. Many government and NGO offices were established after the conversion of the subdivision into a district headquarter. There is no housing settlement department and house-building finance corporation office in the district. Housing problem is supposed to be solved by granting housing loan and establishing housing estate. So a house building finance corporation office should immediately be established at Chandpur to solve the housing problem.

One beaten to death in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Aug 12: Abdul Mannan, 45, a farmer was beaten to death by some miscreants at Khodabokkathi village under Bakerganj thana of the district yesterday.

Witnesses said, Mannan was working in his farm land in the morning when 5 to 6 persons went into the field and beat Mannan mercilessly and left him unconscious there.

Later Mannan was taken to his home in critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries.

Snatched gold chain recovered, one held

RAJSHAHI, Aug 12: Police recovered a snatched gold chain from a jewellery in the town yesterday, reports UNB.

Uzzal, 18, was arrested for snatching the gold chain from a female student of Tapashi Rabeya Hall of Rajshahi University at gun point on Saturday evening.

The snatching took place while she was returning to her dormitory from market.

A case was filed with Motihar police.

Anti-social activities rampant on RU Campus

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Aug 12: Anti-social activities have become rampant at Rajshahi University. Hijacking and mugging are now quite frequent inside the campus. According to a Bengali national daily some 27 incidents of hijacking have taken place inside the university campus. Police force staying in the campus have been playing a mysterious role to check these hijackings.

Recently two muggers were caught red handed while trying to hijack a gold necklace from a female student at broad day light. The muggers have apparently chosen three places for their safe business. These places viz front of Zuberi International Guest House

(Teachers Club), front of University Botanical Garden and behind the second and third science building. Most of the hijacking cases occurred in these places.

Blue films are screened near the university railway station for long in exchange of Tk 5 each ticket. Students of the university are the main viewers of these obscene. Phensidyl, ganja, tarree are openly sold near the station bazar and Binudpur Bazar. University students are the customer of these drugs. Gambling also takes place in Binudpur Bazar near university campus.

No police action have been reported so far to eliminate these evil acts.

Decomposed body recovered

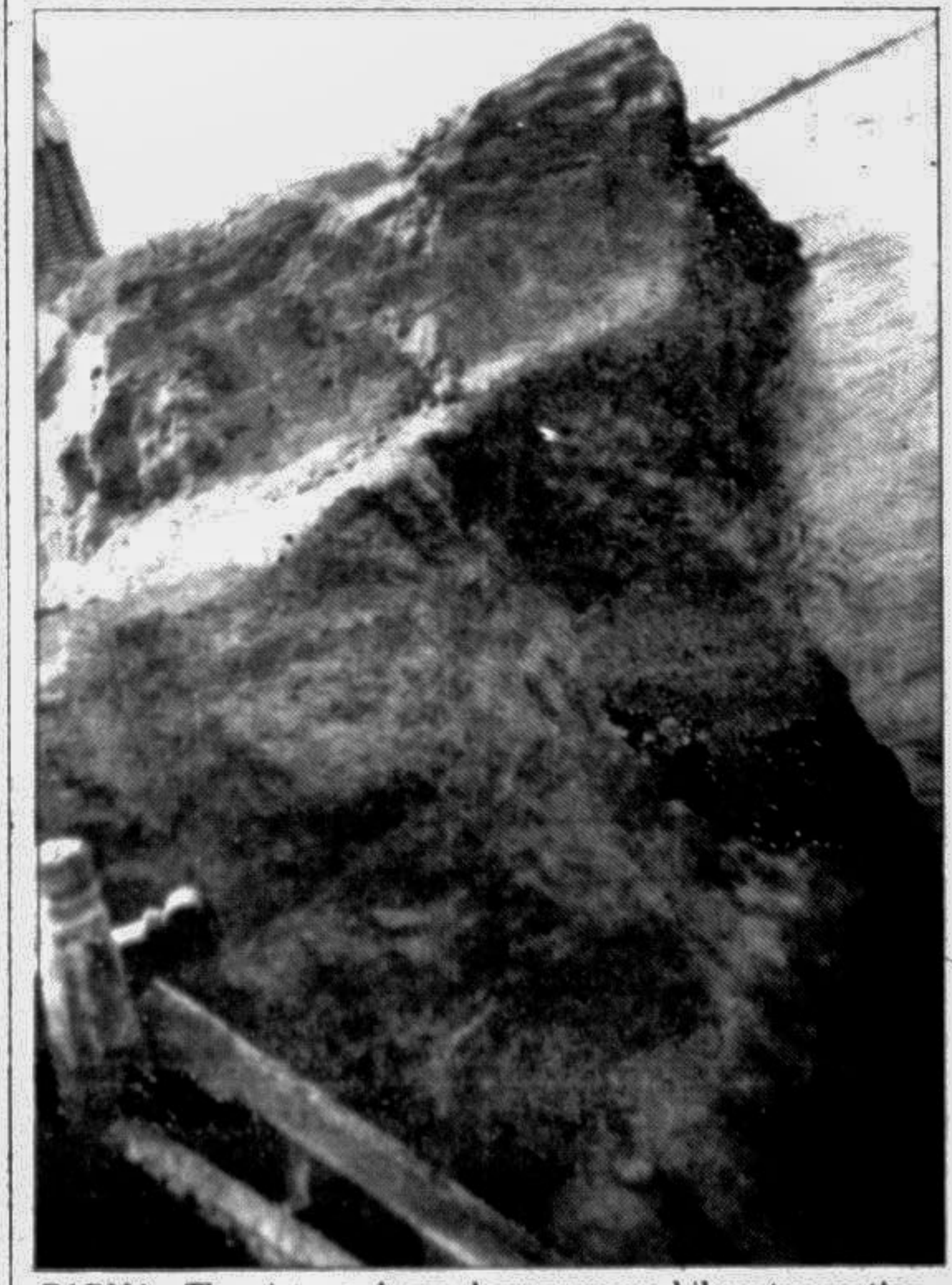
From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Aug 12: Barisal Kotwali police recovered the decomposed body of Jasim from a shoal (char) of Kirtankhola river near Lamchari village yesterday morning following information given by the local people.

Jasim remained untouched from Lamchari village under sadar thana of the district since Thursday night last. He along with some others that evening with a trawler went to Lamchari for occupying possession of a disputed land but there they reportedly faced resistance by the local people.

His rival group chased them and caught 3 of them, eyes of whose were later gouged out. Jasim remained untraced since that evening after the incident till recovery of his body yesterday morning with several injury marks.



PABNA: A village within Bera thana face threat of erosion by river Jamuna which was still continuing. —Star photo



PABNA: The picture shows how over one kilometre portion of the North Bengal Highway at Nagarbari ghat was eroded by river Jamuna recently. —Star photo