

Bank loan defaulters

Farmers flee homes to escape arrest

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR Sept 6: About two hundred defaulter who had taken loan in Pirgonj thana under the district had homes and residing in hiding at unknown places to avoid arrest. Of them nine farmers have been taken under custody by police on charge of defaulting of agriculture loans and sent to jail.

Nine branches of Sonali, Janata, Rupali and Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan banks of Pirgonj thana area had lodged Krishi loan defaulting cases against 322 farmers. Among them arrest warrant was already issued against two hundred farmers while the arrest of warrants against the rest defaulters are now under process.

Pirgonj thana Nirbahi officer and certificate officer issued that warrant of arrest against the loan defaulting farmers.

Third time flood in Pabna causes extensive damage to crops

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA, Sept 6: Flood, with all its fury, has again taken a serious turn in the river Padma flowing through the southern end, in the west-east direction of Pabna district and inundated vast areas of land in 15 unions of four thanas of the district. This is the third consecutive attack of flood in river Padma and this time the river-water rose higher than the two previous occasions in the month of July and early August.

About 15,000 men, women and children were lying marooned in at least four unions under Bera, Sujaganar and Pabna sadar thanas.

According to the unofficial statistics collected from various sources, at least 10,000 persons of both the sexes and of various age-groups, became compelled to leave their homes and took shelter on the flood control embankment constructed by the Water Development Board.

The Chairman of Hemayetpur Union Parishad told The Daily Star that the water level

in the river Padma rose very fast. Everyday new areas were being inundated. In his union alone, he claimed that standing crops on more than 5,000 acres were completely destroyed and sowing of new seeds over these lands would not be possible for a long time. It would not be possible for the cultivators to arrange tilling of the land even after recession of flood-water as the land would remain muddy.

The chairman stated that at least 2,000 houses in about 12 villages under his union were damaged — either completely or partially.

Other problems, the chairman said that the problem of drinking water was very much acute in the affected areas as all the tubewells were completely washed away.

The affected areas in all the above four thanas fell outside the Flood Control Embankment. Due to the said embankment six unions, out of ten of the Pabna sadar thana including Pabna pourashava, were



PABNA: A thana health complex building inundated by flood water. — Star photo

saved Saturday last and was steadily rising everyday engulfing new areas.

As many as 70 villages of the four thanas — covering 16

thana, Chartarapur, Hemayetpur, Dogachhi Dapunia and Bharara unions of Pabna sadar thana, Dhalarchar, Masumdia and Jatshakhini unions of Bera thana and Sujaganar, Satboria, Nazirganj and Sagarkandi unions of Sujaganar thana have been faced with severe inundations. Over 15,000 men, women and children in the affected areas were lying marooned awaiting for rescue operations. Over 10,000 people were lying on the adjacent flood control embankments under open sky. The total number of affected people reached near one lakh and the number of houses damaged, either completely or partially. At least 30 educational institutions were declared closed for indefinite period.

Paucity of drinking water has thrown nearly one lakh people in the affected areas into a vulnerable situation with regard to their health. Medical teams were working in the affected areas.

The sufferings of the helpless cattle, poultry and other such animals can hardly be narrated. Fodder problem became extremely acute alongside the problem of their shelter. Theft of cattle was also rampant, it was alleged.

When contacted over telephone, Muhammad Ishaque Ali, Deputy Commissioner Pabna told this correspondent that the administration, both in the district and in the thana levels were carefully watching and monitoring the situations. He disclosed that 60 metric tons of rice, 12 metric tons of wheat and Tk 12,000 as grant have been distributed among the flood victims of Pabna district this year so far. Besides 61 tons of biscuits have also been distributed.

He further disclosed that an amount of over Tk 4,00,000 was lying with him as house building grant. But, he added, the money would be distributed thana-wise soon on the basis of losses suffered by the victims.

Abducted girl rescued

From Our Correspondent.

PABNA, Sept 6: Minor girl Ruma Khatoon alias Rina, 12, daughter of one Abdur Rahim of village Bhawanipur, who was abducted three weeks back, was rescued by Bhangora thana police from the house of Ghulam Mustafa, son of Mujibar Rahman of the same village recently. Ghulam Mustafa was arrested, and produced before the Magistrate's Court.

It was gathered from police sources that on August 6, while Ruma Khatoon alias Rina was going to attend school, she was abducted by accused Mustafa on the way.

Police was informed about the missing incident.

Rina, after her recovery along with said Mustafa was also sent to Pabna jail where she has put to safe custody.

Meanwhile, Mustafa is learnt to have claimed that he married Rina and both of their were living together till their arrest, as husband and wife, in his house.

Following are photos taken by our Staff Photojournalist, AKM Mohsin during voting hours yesterday, Thursday in various polling centres in Pirojpur -2 constituency. During the day-long by-election no untoward incident was reported.



Voters at a polling centre. The respective polling agents in Kaokhali are seen checking list of voters' name before start of voting. Female voters' turnout was more than the male at the centre in the district.

Following are the photos taken by our Staff Photojournalist, Amran Hossain during the day-long voting hours yesterday, Thursday in Laxmipur-2 constituency. A number of incidents of obstruction by some political party activists from casting votes were reported.



Securitymen on way to see an alleged attempt by some party supporters to prevent female voters to cross a shako (bamboo made bridge) on Mahadevpur-Munshibari road.



Voters in a queue waiting at the Shiyalkhathi School polling centre in Bhandaria thana. Police and a female member of village Ansar is seen at the entrance point of the booth.



Army troops taking one person into custody during the voting hour. The accused allegedly threatened voters near Baraitola in Ramganj sarak not to cast their votes.



This photo of North Nadamulash School was taken at about 11 in the morning. Voter turnout here was noticed to be rather poor in comparison to other polling centres in Kaokhali.



Nandanpur Primary School polling centre was seen almost empty of any voters at 10:30 in the morning. The presiding officer informed this photo journalist that voting cast at the centre was going well. However, many voters in the area alleged that most of the voters were prevented from entering the school area by the supporters of the local AL candidate. A female voter, age about 13 was caught red-handed by an attending presiding officer while attempting to cast her vote.