

National

News snaps

Work of pontoon bridge progressing

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, July 22: Work of the pontoon bridge over the river Khowa at Shaistaganj on Dhaka-Sylhet road began on Monday.

The original bridge collapsed on July 13 due to pressure of flood waters. As a result direct road communication of Sylhet with the rest of the country was snapped. Over one hundred jawans joined the construction work. A contingent of the military engineering services has been entrusted with the task. The pontoon bridge will be ready for vehicular traffic within 5 days, said an official.

200 BL College students join BCL

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, July 22: Two hundred students government of BL College belonging to different student wings of political parties joined Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on Monday.

The new entrants include 56 Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists. They joined (BCL) in protest against the chaotic situation at Baitul Mukarram in presence of President Shahabuddin Ahmed at the Miladunnabi function. In rally the new BCL workers vowed to resist the conspiracy of fundamentalist at any cost against national independence and sovereignty.

Asharee Purnima celebrated in Comilla

COMILLA, July 22: Asharee Purnima, a religious festival of the Buddhists was celebrated in Comilla district on July 19 with solemn devotion and traditional enthusiasm, reports BSS.

The members of the Buddhist community celebrated the day through different programmes which included, hoisting of the national and religious flags atop all monasteries, chanting of the sacred verses from the holy Tripitak, breaking of fasting by the monks, shilghram, feeding the monks, *pradip puja*, discussions and mass prayer.

Farmers' rally in Netrakona

NETRAKONA, July 22: A farmer's rally organised by Bangladeshi Krishak League, Netrakona district unit was held at Khalrajuri bazar recently, reports BSS.

The rally was presided over by Nurul Islam Khan, President, Khalrajuri thana unit of the organisation. The speakers of the rally said that the new budget will play an effective role in poverty alleviation and development of rural infrastructure.

New police camp at Kaliganj

SATKHIRA, July 22: A new police camp has been set up at Kaliganj Hospital building on the north side of the river Kakkali under Kaliganj thana of the district recently, reports BSS.

The police camp has been set up to check anti-social activities in the area. One Sub-inspector, three constables and six Ansars have been posted in the camp.

Workshop on molasses production

MADRIPUR, July 22: A workshop on how to increase production of molasses outside the mill areas concluded here recently, reports BSS.

Thirty sugarcane growers from Shibchow thana participated in the day long workshop. Additional Director of Agriculture Extension Department Md Moazzemul Huq, subject-matter specialists and training officers conducted the workshop.

24 gamblers held from Meherpur

MEHERPUR, July 22: Police in a drive against the anti-social elements recently arrested 24 gamblers from Meherpur town, reports BSS.

Acting on a tip-off, the police raided a den of gamblers and arrested them. Most of the arrested persons are students and branded criminals. A case was filed in this connection.

Indian goods seized

SATKHIRA, July 22: The members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized contraband Indian goods worth over Taka 43 lakh on Friday last, reports BSS.

Acting on secret information, the members of Bangladesh Rifles of 21 battalion raided a house of one Moshirul Rahman of village Goga and seized Indian goods from his house. The BDR source said, the goods include saree and other cloth. Moshirul Rahman was arrested and handed over to Kalana police.

73,032 immunized in Barisal

BARISAL, July 22: A total of 73,032 children and mothers have been immunized under Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) in 10 thanas of Barisal district during January-June 1997, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the children have been vaccinated against six fatal diseases-tuberculosis, diphtheria, polio, whooping cough, tetanus and measles. Of the total, 33,911 children have been given DPT injections. 31,055 children measles vaccination, 33,911 children polio drops, and 36,922 children BCG vaccines.

Discussion on Population Day

PATUAKHALI, July 22: A discussion on "Adolescent reproductive health care" was held at local poura auditorium recently, reports BSS.

The discussion was held in observance of the World Population Day. Deputy Director, District Family Planning KM Anowaruzzaman presided over the meeting, while ADC (general) Md Azmal Hossain was present as chief guest.

419 ring-wells inoperative in Bandarban

BANDARBAN, July 22: Drinking water supply system in the district is threatened as 419 ring-wells in seven thanas are affected by the flood, reports UNB.

Local people said government has sanctioned only 50 ring-wells for the affected areas which is too meager to cater to the need and it is time consuming to repair the affected ring-wells.

Executive Engineer of the Public Health Department here said that the lone pump house of drinking water supply project and another pump house in Uzanipara may be damaged any time by the river erosion.

Price of Boro paddy falls

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, July 22: Prices of newly harvested Boro paddy in different parts of Chapainawabganj and Rangamati district have marked an unusual fall creating frustration among the growers, reports UNB.

Local people said marginal farmers are incurring a loss of Tk 20 to 30 per maund because of low price. Boro paddy is now being sold between Tk 180 and 200 per maund in different hats and bazaars of the two districts. Taking advantage of the situation a group of middle men have taken control of the paddy market. These middle men buy paddy at low price for selling the same at high prices later.

387 RIPP schemes implemented

PIROJPUR, July 22: District Relief and Rehabilitation Department has implemented 387 schemes here under Rural Infrastructure Preservation Programme (RIPP), reports UNB.

About 898 mts wheat were utilised for the schemes which included repair of roads, embankments, renovation of madrasas, mosques and other educational institutions. Of the schemes, 62 each in Bhandaria, Nazirpur and Sadar, 41 in Kaokhali, 90 in Mathbaria and 63 in Nesarabad were implemented. Besides three schemes were executed in Mathbaria pourashava and four in Pirojpur pourashava.

Extortionist arrested

SIRAJGANJ, July 22: Police nabbed a youth along with a revolver from a village in Belkuchi thana for his alleged involvement in extortion on Sunday, reports UNB.

Anisur Rahman, 20, son of Matur Rahman of village Bowra, was caught by villagers and later handed over to police. He was collecting illegal toll from some co-villagers. A case was filed with Belkuchi police, and the accused was sent to jail.

Body recovered

CHITTAGONG, July 22: Pahartali Police recovered body of a woman at the corridor of Alhaj Mohammad Ali Academy High School at Halishahar here on Monday police said, reports BSS.

The guard of the school who went to open the gate of the school saw the body of the woman and informed Pahartali Police. Police found the body wrapped up with saree at her neck, the sources said. The woman aged about 30 could not be identified. The body was sent for autopsy. A case was filed with Pahartali Police in this connection.

Foundation of Shilpkala bldg laid

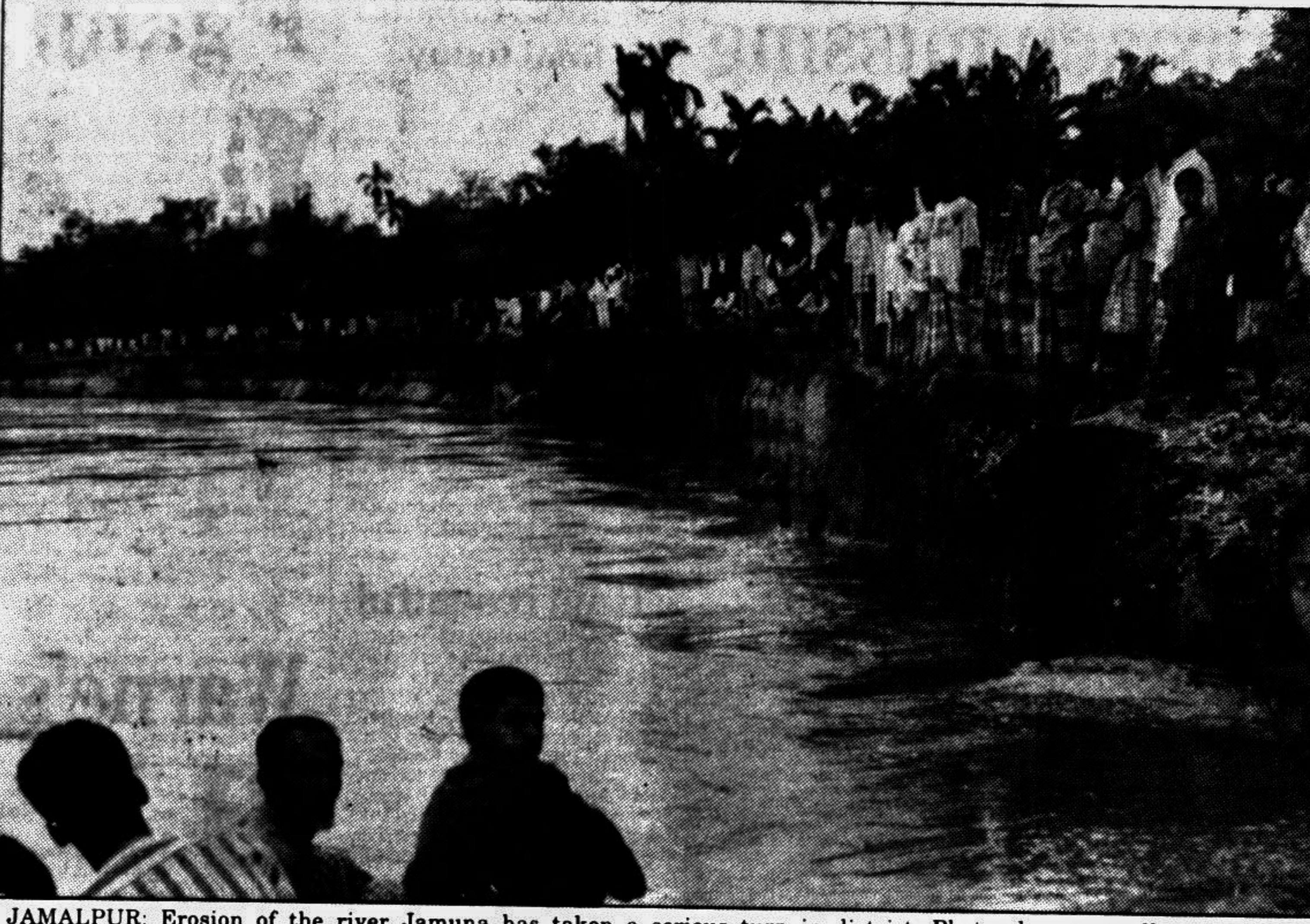
BORGUNA, July 22: State Minister for youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader on Sunday laid the foundation of Borguna District Shilpkala Academy building being built at a cost of Taka 1 crore and sixty-two lakh, reports BSS.

Deputy Minister for shipping Dhirendra Debnath Sambu and local MP's were present.

Training course on tailoring

MANIKGANJ, July 22: A four-month long training course on tailoring began last week at the office of the Assistant Director of Youth Development here, reports BSS.

A total of 50 unemployed female youths from seven thanas of the district are taking part in the training.



JAMALPUR: Erosion of the river Jamuna has taken a serious turn in district. Photo shows an affected area of Kulkandi union under Islampur thana.

Star photo

River erosion takes alarming turn in Jamalpur, C'nawabganj

By Staff Correspondent

Erosion of the rivers Jamuna, Brahmaputra and Padma has taken serious turn recently in Jamalpur and Chapainawabganj districts.

Our Jamalpur Correspondent says: the rivers Jamuna and Brahmaputra have already devoured a vast tract of land in the district. It is continuing to grab fresh areas. As a result educational institutions, markets, government offices, residential areas and railway ferry ghat are threatened.

The river erosion has taken serious turn with rise in water level in the aforementioned rivers. Like previous years this year also river erosion has rendered thousands of people homeless. About five lakh people mostly poor, have taken shelter on roads, beside railway line, embankment and other places. The railway ghat was shifted several times. Many shops of Bahadurabad ghat area have already been devoured.

Inadequate measures have been taken by the concerned authorities so far to check the erosion in the district. Thousand acres of land have been devoured by the rivers. This has seriously affected crop out of the district. This year too, standing crops have been affected by both drought and river erosion.

According to unofficial sources, more than 80 per cent areas in six unions of Islampur thana have been lost by the river erosion during the last five years. The worst affected unions are Kulkandi, Chinaduli, Nowarpura, Shopdari, Belgassa and Char-Gualini.

This river erosion has affected 50,000 acres of crop land during the past few years. About 50 villages in six unions of Islampur thana alone were affected. Hundreds of people took shelter in different places. The erosion victims were not provided with any relief goods.

This year's severe erosion has threatened many buildings and structures. The 100-year-old Gohali bazar, Gohali High School, Heroin worth Tk 50 lakh seized

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, July 22: Police recovered 500 grams of heroin worth about Taka 50 lakh and arrested one person from a hotel under Kaliganj thana of the district recently, according to police sources.

Police said, acting on a tip-off, a contingent of police led by Shibli Norman, Office-in-Charge (OC) of Jhenidah thana raided Hotel Shahi at about 10:30am on the day.

The arrested was identified as Omnidil alias Patu. Two others fled away.

going on in full swing near Bahadurabad ghat. The project is expected to conclude next June.

Our Chapainawabganj Correspondent adds: Serious erosion of the river Padma has been continuing in 'char' areas of the district. Meanwhile, heavy shower has aggravated the situation.

During the last few days about one hundred families of Bakhrali under Nawabganj sadar thana rendered shelterless as their houses were washed away by the Padma.

The recent erosion has affected vast area from Pangamari of Bakhrali to Khamra zero point. During the last few days erosion the Padma has devoured 80 yard areas. Meanwhile, Bakhrali Government Primary School has been devoured by the Jamuna. This year continues river erosion has affected 60,000 acres of land. A source of Operation and Maintenance Division of Bangladesh Water Development Board (WDB) informed this correspondent that smooth maintenance and repairing works of the embankment are disturbed as both sides of the embankment are occupied by affected landless

people. Due to pressure of flood water the Dewanganj and Islampur portion of the embankment has damaged. Different NGOs distributed house building materials among the erosion victims. Recently State Minister for Land Al-Haj Rashed Mosharraf visited the erosion sides in Islampur thana and distributed some relief goods among the affected families.

Erosion affected landless

families who are mostly agricultural labourers have been

facing starvation. Scarcity of pure drinking water, cloths and medicine has been prevailing.

When contacted some erosion victims told this correspondent that they had taken shelter on the embankment, Islampur Thana Old Court Building, Thana Parishad Bhaban, and different government khas land. Different NGOs in the meantime are helping them with food and house building materials. The affected people need rehabilitation.

Nurul Islam, Chairman of Shapdari union under Islampur thana told this correspondent that he took shelter in Islampur Thana Officers Staff Quarter with his family members. He lost his homestead by the Jamuna erosion.

Total damage was estimated at Taka 25,000 crore.

Recently, Religious State Minister Moulana Nurul Islam visited some erosion affected areas his own constituency. He distributed some relief goods among the victims.

Erosion and flood control

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