

## News snaps

### Langabandh-Kushtia bus service snapped

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Aug 1: Direct bus service between Langabandh of Magura district and Kushtia town remained snapped due to bad shape of Ganges Kobodah (CK) Canal road resulting an immense suffering to the local people of the route.

Hundreds of passengers including women, students and traders are compelled to use Langabandh-Kushtia route via Magura and Jhenidah pucca road which is 50 kms longer than the above mentioned road. As a result, price of essential commodities increased rapidly.

### 2 absconding convicts arrested

From CHT Correspondent

KAPTAL (Rangamati), Aug 1: Police arrested two absconding convicts from Shilchharipara in Kaptal thana of the district on Sunday in a raid.

The rounded up absconding convicts were identified as Mong Jai Marmar, 30, and Sisa Mong Marmar, 28, who were sentenced with a rigorous imprisonment of 14 months each by a magistrate court of Rangamati, Kaptal thana police said. The arrested persons were sent to Rangamati court.

### Body recovered

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 1: Body of a young man was recovered by police from a canal of Agailjhara thana in Barisal district recently.

Police and witnesses said, Abdur Rab Ripan, a young man of village Lakkhan Kati under Gourunadi thana in Barisal district was remained untraced for two days.

On the day of his missing some unidentified people called him out from his house. He remained missing from then. Farida Begum, mother of Repan filed a case with Gourunadi thana in this connection.

### Youth commits suicide

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Aug 1: A young man committed suicide by taking poison at village Bamanpara of Lalpur thana in the district recently.

According to police source, Abdur Razzak, 22, son of Fakir Uddin of village Bamanpara of Lalpur thana committed suicide by taking pesticide. The cause of the suicide could not be known. A case was filed with Lalpur police.

### Shortage of train engines

PABNA, Aug 1: Railway passengers in western zone have been suffering a lot as trains, particularly the mail and local ones, can not move on schedule due to shortage of engines, reports UNB.

An official source said 117 passenger trains and 15 goods trains run daily in the zone. But schedule operation of trains is hampered for the lack of available engines. In road gauge section, out of 68 engines, life-span of 55 and in metre gauge section, out of 50 engines, life-span of 19 were expired. Besides, due to lack of skilled manpower, necessary spare parts and requisite fund, 10-12 defective engines can not be repaired in Parbatpur Railway locomotive shed.

### Huge quantity of smuggled goods seized

COMILLA, Aug 1: The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel seized a huge quantity of smuggled goods worth Taka 6 crore 50 lakh and 30 thousand from different border areas of Comilla and Brahmanbaria districts during the first six months of 1997, reports BSS.

A BDR source said the smuggled goods included 14,958 bottles of phenylephrine syrup, 161 kgs of ganja, 6115 bottles of wine, 12,582 Indian sarees, 152,292 kgs of sugar and 45,933 kgs of salt. Besides, smuggled milk powder, electrical equipment, spare parts and medicine were also seized.

### Middlemen depriving jute growers

LALMONIRHAT, Aug 1: Raw jute has appeared in the markets of the district and is selling at Tk 160 to Tk 200 per maund according to quality, reports BSS.

There are a few jute purchasing centres in the district. But they did not start purchase of jute. In the absence of jute purchasing centres, price of jute has fallen. Besides, the middlemen and faras are taking advantage of bad economic condition of growers. They are purchasing jute at low price when the needy jute growers come to sell their cash crop.

### Afforestation drive in Bhola

BHOLA, Aug 1: District Agriculture Extension Department has taken up a programme to plant about 1.64 lakh of saplings in seven thanas of the district in the current season, reports UNB.

Of the total saplings, 50,000 will be planted in Sadar thana, 10,000 in Dawlat Khan, 18,700 in Borhanuddin, 20,000 in Lalmoan, 10,000 in Tajumuddin, 50,000 in Charfession and 5,500 in Mompura thanas. The department has also distributed about 5,000 saplings among 1,700 farmers in seven thanas under its Agriculture Support Services Programme.

### 3 killed by snake bite

SATKHIRA, Aug 1: Three persons, two of them women, died by snake bite in three thanas of the district recently, reports BSS.

According to family source, Alhaj Sheikh Shamsur Rahman, 60, of village Rohimpur under Kaliganj thana died by snake bite when he was sleeping in his room. Aklima Khatun, 55, wife of Shamsur Rahman Sardar of village Godajpur under Assasuri thana died by snake bite when she was doing household work in her kutchra house, family source said. According to another family source, Nasima Khatun, 20, wife of Faruque of village Oferpur under Kalaroa thana died by snake bite when she was asleep in her house.

### Crimes on rise

MOULVI BAZAR, Aug 1: A total of 238 criminal incidents took place in Moulvibazar district in the months of April and May this year, according to a report of the district law and order committee, reports BSS.

The report said, 10 persons were murdered and one person was kidnapped during the months. Besides, three dacoities, 25 thefts and three cattle-liftings were committed in different places of the district. A total of eight women were violated and tortured and a police-man was also harassed during the period. 173 other minor criminal incidents were also reported.

### Separate incidents kill 2

BOGRA, Aug 1: Two people, including an old woman, were killed in separate incidents in Sadar and Adamdighi thanas of the district on Monday, reports UNB.

Police said a gang of unidentified armed terrorists shot Teieb Ali after entering his house at village Gobindapur in Sadar thana at dead of night. Teieb Ali succumbed to his injuries on way to hospital. In another incident at Zinir village in Adamdighi thana, a widow, Rahima, 63, was killed in a clash on a trifling matter. The clash ensued following taking baths of children into a local pond.

### Rly earns profit

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 1: Bangladesh Railway western zone earned Tk 106.61.20.000 during the last fiscal year, which shows an increase of Tk 7 crore than the previous fiscal year, reports UNB.

In the fiscal 1995-96 the railway earned Tk 99,18,49,000. Official sources said out of the total, Tk 28,08,88,000 was earned from carrying 1,60,89,000 passengers, Tk 56,82,64,000 from carrying 17,88,000 metric tons of goods and Tk 21,69,68,000 from other sectors.

### Another killed by snake bite

PATUAKHALI, Aug 1: Md Mazibur Khondaker, 32, son of late Eakin Khondaker of town Bahalgasia in sadar thana of the district, died of snake bite recently, reports BSS.

Local sources said, the deceased was bitten by a snake on his way home from village Aulapur. Snake charmers tried to bring the poison out from his body, but failed.

### Woman hacked to death

SYLHET, Aug 1: A rickshaw-puller of village Bagerkhola in Zaintapur thana hacked to death his nine month pregnant wife with a sharp weapon recently, reports UNB.

According to police, rickshaw-puller Manju Mia, 30, following a family feud murdered his wife Peara Begum with a sharp 'dao'. Police recovered the body and arrested the cruel husband. The body was sent to Osmani Medical College Hospital for post mortem. A case was filed with the police.

### Uplift projects work progressing

RANGPUR, Aug 1: Rangpur Zila Parishad has undertaken a programme to execute more than 21 projects in 8 thanas of the district at a cost of Taka 5.81 crore during the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

Under the programme, constructions and re-constructions of roads, bridges and dak banglows will be executed in the district.



GAIBANDHA: A rural boy of flood affected Fulchhari thana in the district returning to his temporary shelter after plucking leaf from jute plants (*Patshak*). It is his daily food now. — Star photo

### 42 fishermen feared drowned as boats, trawlers capsize in Bay

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 1: At least 42 fishermen were feared drowned as nine boats and two trawlers capsized in the Bay of Bengal and in the rivers in Patuakhali, Bhola and Barguna districts Wednesday.

Witnesses said, 13 fishermen are feared dead as three boats sank near Ashchar in the Bay some 70 kilometre from Patharghata.

Two boats and one trawler with 22 fishermen on board sank in to Meghna river near the offshore islands of Dublar-char and Charkukrimukri in Bhola district.

Four more fishing boats and a trawler capsized with seven fishermen on board near Mahipur some 4 kilometre from Kuakata under Kalapara thana of Patuakhali district.

Five fishermen - Abul Hossain, Ramzan, Liakat, Saiful and Ali - were rescued.

### 3 alleged terrorists held in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 1: Three alleged terrorists were held while trying to loot valuables from the office of a foreign company in Rajganj thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The terrorists - Altaf Hossain, 35, Abdul Khaleque, 20, and Alamgir, 24 - stormed the office of Samwhan Corporation, engaged in construction of the approach road of Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge, at Nakla in the thana.

Employees of the company caught them red-handed and handed over to police. A case was filed.

### Faridpur Press Club executives

From Our Correspondent



FARIDPUR, July 30: Munshi Harun-or-Rashid and Montu Das Gopi were elected president and general secretary respectively of Faridpur Press Club for the year 1997-98 through an election held here recently.

### Anniversary of death

The first anniversary of death of late Mohit Chandra Nath will be held today (Saturday) at his village home at Binodpur in Noakhali district, reports UNB.

Late Nath died of cancer in Dhaka on July 30 last year at the age of 76.

He left behind his wife, four sons, three daughters and a host of relatives and well-wishers. His youngest son, Shankar Bihari Nath, is a sub-editor of the United News of Bangladesh (UNB).

Relatives and well-wishers have been requested to attend the first-year holy ritual of *Sradha* of late Nath.

### BAU exams from Sept 21

MYMENSINGH, Aug 1: Examinations of different departments of Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) will begin on September 21, reports UNB.

The examinations are: MSC (Vet Science) 1991, MSC (Agriculture) 1991, MSC (Fisheries) 1991, MSC (Ag Eng) 1991, MSC (Ag) 1991, MSC (Ag Ext Ad) 1991, MSC (Ag Eco) 1992 and MSC (Ag Eco-General) 1992.

Detailed schedule of the examinations will be announced in due time, according to a BAU press release.

## Kaptal Lake water contaminated

From A K M Zahoorul Huq

RANGAMATI, Aug 1: Water of 68,800 hectares Kaptal Lake which criss-cross the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban has been contaminated beyond safe limit.

Some 450 people of the lake area died due to various water-borne diseases in the last six months. A total of 87 persons died of diarrhoea during June 15 to July 15 this year alone, according to reports received from the local representatives and concerned officials.

Over two lakh people have complaints of intestinal diseases which the Public Health experts said due to drinking and usage of contaminated lake water.

The lake water contains bacteria in alarming proportions, drinking of which, according to the health experts, may cause outbreak of cholera, diarrhoea,

typhoid, dysentery and other intestinal diseases within a short span of time.

Public Health experts and environmental specialists recently conducted a sample study to determine how far the lake water was safe for use.

Chemical tests revealed that about 500 coliform bacteria existed in 100 milli-litre of lake water, where water with only two bacteria are said to be safe for use. Moreover, following the recent flash flood, the Kaptal Lake water has become so much muddy that it can not be taken for even bathing or washing cloth and utensils.

Environment Directorate also simultaneously tested water from 12 other district headquarters of Chittagong division and contamination with coliform bacteria varies from 20-400 in every 100 milli-litre of water.

## Literacy rate slowing down in Sylhet

RAJNAGAR (Moulvibazar), Aug 1: Participants at a workshop here recently identified a root cause of retardation in the field of education in greater Sylhet, reports BSS.

They said the children of greater Sylhet opt for going abroad after they become young and this trend is gradually slowing down the rate of literacy as well as standard of education in the district.

The workshops on 'Problems and solution of education programme in Rajnagar thana' was organised by Moulana Muhammad Hussain Women's College here recently. With eminent economist and chairman of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) Dr. Quazi Kholluzzaman Ahmad in the chair, the workshop was participated by educationists, politicians and government officials of Rajnagar thana under Moulvibazar district. Deputy commissioner of Moulvibazar G K M Nurul Amin was the chief guest.

The participants said that only 19 per cent success in the last SSC examinations in Rajnagar thana had created concern among all guardians, teachers and the general people.

They said absence of adequate teachers in the educational institutions and lack of coordination between guardians and teachers were two other main reasons of such backwardness in the field of education in this area.

The participants strongly felt that unified efforts should be launched immediately in greater Sylhet to resolve all problems facing education in this region.

Dr. Quazi Kholluzzaman Ahmad stressed the need for creating awareness among the guardians and students side by side developing the sense of values among all.

He also called for motivating girls towards education to help them establish in the society with dignity and honour.

### Schoolboy killed by lightning

NILPHAMARI, Aug 1: A schoolboy was killed and a young man injured by lightning in West Kuchiaror village in Sadar thana recently reports UNB.

Villagers said Swapan, 11, son of one Shachindranath of the village was seriously injured when a thunderbolt struck him in a field adjacent to their residence while bringing home their cow during heavy fall at about 4 pm.

One Dijen who was walking alongside Swapan, a class II student of the Fakirpara Non-government Primary School, brought him to Nilphamari Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

The specialists, according to a source from the Local Government Council of Rangamati Hill District had been shocked to find the so high bacteria content and expressed their grave concern to the local authorities.

More than a million people of the three districts use water of the Kaptal lake directly or indirectly which was apparently clean.

More depressing is that dangerous bacteria infection has also been noticed in the water supplied from the treatment plants.

The specialists from the Environment Pollution Control Directorate tested water supplied from the treatments plants of the three hill district headquarters found 300 coliform bacteria in 100 milli-litre of water. Hotels and restaurants as well as the rest house managed by the government agencies were also serving dangerous coliform infected water to their customers and guests, they said.

Specialists said treated water and tap-water in the hotels and restaurants are contaminated by the lake water which mixes with the supplied water in any way or the other.

Surprisingly, the Krana-phuli hydro-station authorities at Kaptal has been supplying an alarming proportion of mud with water to some 10,000 consumers from its so-called modern water treatment plant, built in 1993 last at a cost of about Taka three crore, sufferers alleged. The situation apparently has worsened following the recent flash flood.

The chairman of Rangamati municipality, Moni Swapan Dewan, said water tanks and pipe-lines remained unclean for years which was another reason for contamination of treated water. The municipality authorities could not do the job for constraint of fund, he said.

Mohammad Shah Alam, the Deputy Commissioner of Rangamati hill district said, the authorities concerned has been asked to find out the causes of contamination and suggest ways to control it.

Shah Alam further said a systematic campaign should be launched to warn the lake water-users of the danger and motivate them to use boiled water or depend on tubewell water.

But other sources said many tubewells in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban had either gone out of order or did not sink deep enough to reach the ground water level.

### Action against village quacks sought

PABNA, Aug 1: Public health is threatened due to the rise in a number of pharmacies without drug licence, quack and roving 'kabiraj' in the district in an alarming proportion, reports UNB.

The medicine shops without licence have sprung up in different hats and bazars. According to statistics there are about 150 pharmacies in the poura areas most of which are without licence.

Issuing drug licence remained closed since 1986 and taking the advantage, the medicine shops have sprung up with the connivance with some dishonest officials of the department concerned. The owners or salesmen of these shops having no training sometimes prescribe wrong medicine causing suffering to the patients.

Besides, the public health is also threatened due to sale of date-expired and sub-standard medicines in these shops.

Local people alleged that the quacks and kabiraj prescribe medicines for fatal diseases causing deaths in many cases.

Local leaders have urged the authorities to take immediate action against the unlicensed pharmacy owners and village quacks.

## Pabna Irrigation Project BWDB refutes allegations

PABNA, Aug 1: Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) has refuted allegations of indifference and lack of endeavours to protect the Pabna Irrigation and Rural Development (embankment) Project, reports BSS.

In a clarification Wednesday the board said erosion on the right bank of the Jamuna river had increased since last December at Pechakola-Nakalia area in Bera thana under Pabna district.

To save the project, the board took measures to construct a 'retired (supporting) embankment' behind the main one.

As a long term project, the board has also proposed implementation of a river training project and submitted a project concept paper (PCP) to the Planning Commission and Economic Relations Division (ERD), seeking Taka 213 crore in foreign aid.

The local people strongly protested land acquisition programmes for a temporary 'retired embankment', fearing that if the project was materialised, the long term river training project would be abandoned, the board said.

They pressed the board to control the erosion by throwing 'sandbags' and concrete blocks as an immediate remedy, the BWDB statement said.

It said despite being an 'ineffective solution', the board was forced to adopt the 'sandbag' project which cost Tk 1.50 crore.

The BWDB statement said the apprehension of the board turned true as the sandbags failed to project the embankment, incurring a loss of Tk 50 lakh as 1.2 kilometers of embankment was devoured by the river.

The statement said observing the failure of sandbags in protecting the erosion, local people seemed to have taken a lenient view and they allowed the board to construct the 'retired embankment'.

In the process, a project costing Tk 10.36 crore was planned, and cooperation of the district administration and the local people for land acquisition was sought on April 23, 1997.

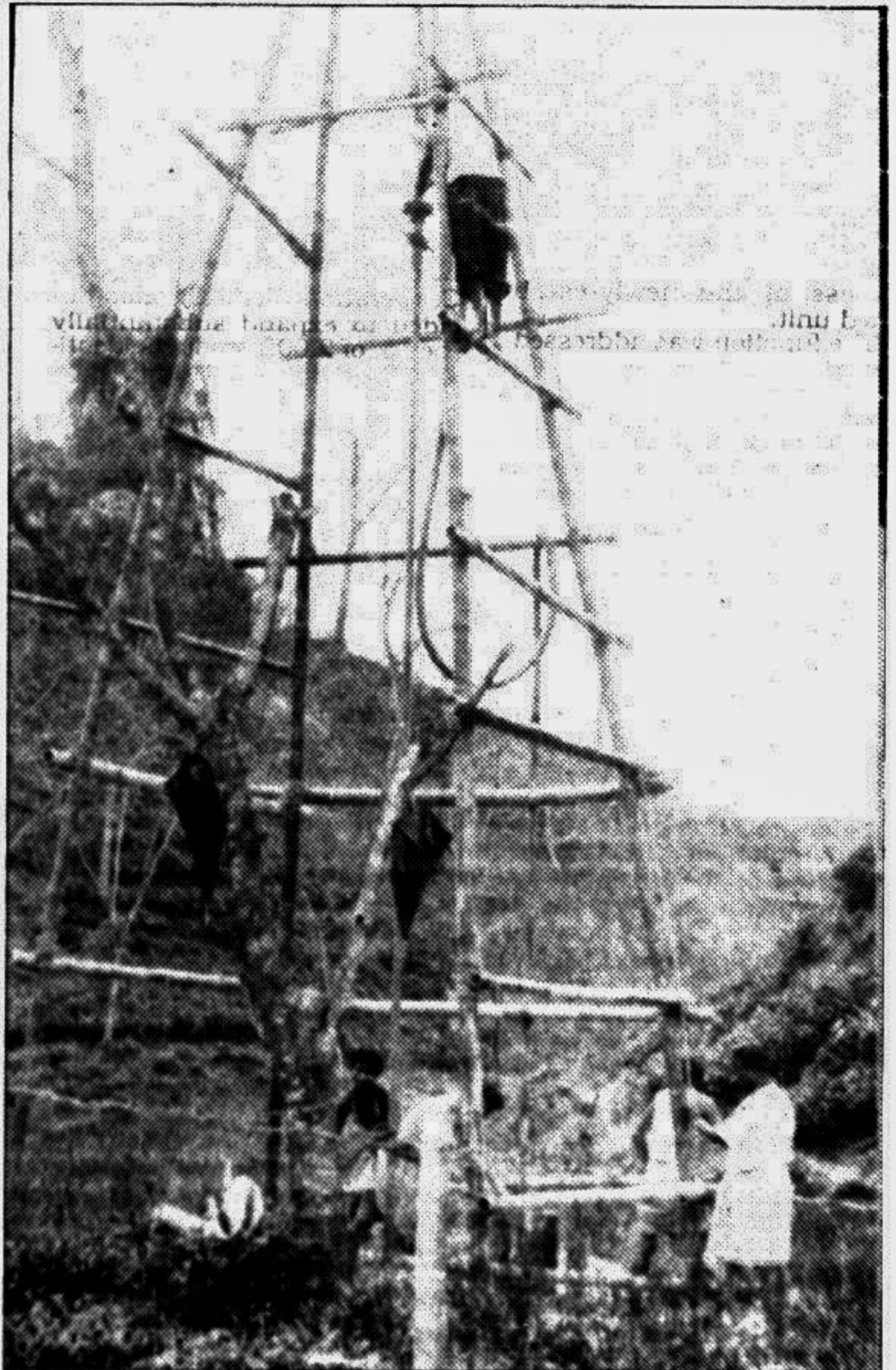
The board initiated the project on June 8, 1997, but the progress of work was obstructed

### Rohingyas accept ration

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Aug 1: The Rohingya refugees at the Kutu-pur camp accepted rations after a 9-day boycott ignoring the threat and pressure of the militant group Wednesday.

The refugees started taking rations at 3 pm ending the demonstrations in front of the camp.



SRIMANGAL: Pipes being installed like tubewells for creating outlets of leaked out gas with a view to avoiding greater mishaps in future. This photo was taken from Fulbari Tea Estate.— Star photo by Anisur Rahman

## Khulna Newsletter

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 1: Khulna Kotwali police recently arrested eight criminals from different areas of the city. They are Abul, Kupon, Jiten, Moin, Jabbar, Iqbal, Nasim and Mukta. All the arrested persons were wanted in several criminal cases.

### Abductor arrested

Kotwali thana police arrested a young man Zakir on charge of abducting Gulshan Ara, 17, daughter of Abdul Latif of Mollahat thana.

She was abducted recently from her parent's house in the city, police said.

### Mugger arrested

Kotwali thana police arrested an alleged mugger Selim, 24, from Shaheed Hadis Park.

He recently mugged Taka 3,600 from a businessman of Natun Bazar, police said.

### Two alleged pirates held

Koria thana police arrested two alleged pirates - Alam and Khokon - and recovered two shutter guns along with 26 rounds of cartridges on their possession from the Sundarbana area recently.

### Spurious phenyl recovered

Kotwali police in a swoop in Baro Bazar recently recovered 33 cans of spurious phenyl from a shop. But none was arrested in this connection.

### Youth killed in Panchhari road mishap

From CHT Correspondent

PANCHHARI (Khagrachhari), Aug 1: A speeding killer truck has claimed the life of a youth on Sunday morning knocking him from behind at Pind Farm area in Panchhari thana of the district.

According to Panchhari police, Zahir, 23, of Talbachhari in Matrangha thana of the district died instantly when he was hit by an empty speeding truck at 8.30 am when he was standing at road side of Pind Farm area in Panchhari thana.

The driver and helper of the truck managed to escape.

The body of Zahir was sent to Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

A case was registered with Panchhari thana police in this connection.