

News snaps

Old age allowance distributed

From Our Correspondent
SATHIRA, July 21: The old age allowance was distributed for the first time among 1080 men and women of Shyamnagar thana in the district recently.

A K Fazul Haq MP, formally handed over cheques to the pensioners at a function held at Shyamnagar Thana Parishad auditorium with SM Nazibullah TNO in the chair. SZM Shirin, Deputy Director, Social Welfare Department, Sathira was present as special guest while Advocate Abu Bakar Siddique, Bakhtiar Ahmed, Prof Zafar Alam and Jagul Haidar spoke on the occasion.

Body recovered

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, July 26: Mirpur thana police recovered a body of an unidentified woman aged about 25 from the bank of the river Sagarkhal in village Beel Amla in Amla union of Mirpur thana recently.

Police said that eight bricks were tied with the body. Police suspect that she was killed and thrown into the river. Police sent the body to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy. A case has been registered with Mirpur police station in this connection.

WDB implements 5 uplift works

SYLHET, July 21: Water Development Board (WDB) implemented five development projects at a cost of Tk 495.56 lakh in the last fiscal year in the district, reports UNB.

An Executive Engineer of WDB informed that the river erosion protection dams were constructed at Kazir Bazar of the district town, Kanishal of Sadar thana and Chasani Mazar areas of Zakiganj thana. Besides, cross-dams at Zikar haor in Sadar thana and Chaoli haor in Companganj thana were constructed during the period. With the implementation of the projects, roads, shops, educational institutions, mosques of the areas will be saved from the river erosion. Besides, crops on several thousand acres in two haor areas will also be protected from the untimely flood, he added.

One killed in Jessore road accident

JESSORE, July 21: An employee of Health Department was killed in a road accident near the Bahadurpur Primary School on Monday morning in Kotwali thana here, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, Sheikh Moinuddin, Assistant Health Inspector of the Thana Health Complex while crossing the road was run over by a Dhaka bound private car. He died on the spot. He was going to participate in a training programme. The killer private car managed to escape from the scene. The dead body was sent to Jessore General Hospital morgue for autopsy. A UD case was registered with the police.

140 destitute families to be rehabilitated

MAGURA, July 21: Some 140 destitute families will be rehabilitated in 14 housing centres now being constructed in four thanas of the district under the 'Asrayan' project, reports UNB.

The work has already been started, said the district administration adding that the Army along with the local authorities are supervising the construction work. Of the total, one is being constructed at Ninandual village in Sadar thana, one at Horindi in Sripur, one at Singra in Shalikia, three at Mousha and eight at Bonogram in Mohamadpur thanas. The officials said each centre will house 10 families selected by a committee.

2 dead bodies exhumed

SATHIRA, July 21: Two dead bodies were exhumed from the graves for re-postmortem by the authorities on the basis of complaints by their relatives, police said, reports UNB.

They were buried in their respective villages after their alleged suicide. According to police, the body of Mustafizur Rahman of Sakhipur in Debhata was exhumed on Sunday. In presence of a magistrate following a complaint by his wife that he was murdered by the opponents. He was buried on July 4. Another dead body of Waliur Rahman of Kala of Assasuni thana who died at his father-in-law's house last week was exhumed on Monday on the similar complaint. He was allegedly buried without postmortem.

Discussion on Population Day

MADARIPUR, July 21: A discussion meeting was held in the TNO office conference room recently to observe the World Population Day, reports BSS.

Deputy Director of Family Planning Md Moklesur Rahman presided over the discussion while Shahan Khan, MP, attended the meeting as the chief guest. MA Khaleq, TNO Sadar Shanaj Parvin and Abu Ali spoke in the meeting.

223 uplift schemes implemented

PIROJPUR, July 21: The Relief and Rehabilitation Department implemented 223 uplift schemes here under the rural infrastructure and reform programme during the last fiscal year, reports UNB.

According to official sources, some 2,421 metric tons of wheat were utilised for the successful implementation of the schemes. The schemes included construction and reconstruction of roads, drains and culverts, excavation and re-excavation of ponds and earth filling works in the premises of different educational institutions. Of the schemes, 34 were implemented in Bhandaria, 18 in Kawkhali, 64 in Mathbaria, 23 in Nazirpur, 40 in Nesarabad and 44 in Sadar thanas.

Tk 2.85 cr dev projects implemented

GAZIPUR, July 21: Gazipur Zila Parishad has implemented 389 development projects at a cost of Tk 2,85,45,000 in the 1997-98 fiscal year with the financial assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), reports BSS.

Zila Parishad sources said, the projects included construction of roads, culverts and bridges, and repairs of primary schools in the rural areas.

Tk 109 cr fisheries project work progressing

KHULNA, July 21: A Taka 109 crore fisheries development project is being implemented during the current month in eight districts of south-western region here, official sources said, reports BSS.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development will finance the project, the source added. Several thousand derelict ponds and haors of four hundred village of Jessore, Jhenidah, Magura, Chuadanga, Kushtia, Meherpur, Faridpur and Rajbari districts will be reexcavate and cleaned under the project. Fish fries will be released in the ponds and haors under the supervision of the fisheries department while local fishermen and farmers will also be imparted short training on pisciculture. Fish production will substantially increase in the region when the project is successfully implemented, the sources said.

Tk 64 lakh land dev tax realised

PIROJPUR, July 21: The revenue department realised Tk 64.54 lakh as land development tax from six thanas of the district during the last fiscal year, reports UNB.

According to official sources, of the amount, Tk 39.14 lakh was realised as outstanding tax and Tk 25.40 lakh as tax due for the last fiscal year. The tax was realised through its 51 Tahsil offices. Mentionable, the target of tax realisation was fixed at Tk 90.78 lakh including outstanding tax.

Training programme on sanitation

RANGAMATI, July 21: A 25-day training programme on sanitation, drinking water, health and nutrition began here at the conference room of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTD) on July 15, reports BSS.

Attended by 29 trainees the training course, organised by CHTD, was inaugurated by the vice-chairman of CHTD, Tara Charan Chakma in a formal function as the chief guest. Project Director of UNICEF-Aided project, A Aziz attended the inaugural session of the training as the special guest while Mohammad Jan-e-Alam, Deputy Project Director of CHTD presided.

5 inter-district dacoits arrested

NARSINGDI, July 21: Rappura thana police arrested five members of inter-district dacoit gang from different places of Narsingdi recently and recovered arms from their possession, reports BSS.

They are identified as Manik Miah, Jamal Miah, Abdur Razzak, Harun Miah, and Nuruzaman. Police said these arrested dacoits committed dacoity in a bus on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Pukar-mara, under Rappura thana on June 26 and robbed cash and ornaments worth about Taka 1,50,000. The arrested dacoits confessed to the police that they had been committing dacoity for a long time in Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Narsingdi routes.

Arms, ammunition recovered

JAMALPUR, July 21: One pipegun with four rounds of bullets, chapati and Chinese axe were recovered from Sarisbari railway gate area on July 10 by police while on patrol duty, reports BSS.

Police Super Faruq Ahmed in a meeting with local journalists here at his office also informed that in the last month of June, police recovered 800 grams of hemp, some quantity of rectified spirit and phenisidyl syrup. Police forces are quite alert to nab the anti-social activists, he added. The Police Super sought the co-operation of the local journalists in maintaining law and order and detecting crime. The Executive President of Jamalpur Press Club Shafiq Zaman thanked the Police Super for enabling them to have the exchange of views.

Many fish species disappear

SUNAMGANJ, July 21: A large number of species of fish have already disappeared from the haor-baors of the district due to various reasons, reports UNB.

Dr AKM Nuruzzaman Khan, an expert on fish, said that the fish resources are on the verge of extinction due to accumulation of silt in haor and baors and various water bodies from the hilly areas and dumping of wastes into the river Surma.

The problem has become so acute that the existing 86 species of fish cannot breed properly in the marshy and polluted water, he added.

The fish are also scarce at the 1,405 'Jalmahals' and marshy areas in the 10 thanas of the district. According to an estimate a total of about 4,000 fishermen have been rendered unemployed due to the scarcity of fish in the open water bodies.

The district administration sources said the 'Jalmahals' or haors are given lease by the Land Ministry on a three-year term.



PABNA: Flood affected people have taken shelter on an embankment near an inundated village at Shahzadpur thana. — Star photo by Ranesh Maitra

Teesta erosion victims in miseries

Gaibandha flood death toll now 7

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, July 21: Flood death toll rose to seven in the district now.

Overall flood situation continued to improve following gradual recession of water in the Teesta, Brahmaputra and Ghagot basin.

Railway authority declared Trimohoni — Balashi railway track unfit for rail communication as surging water collapsed portions of railway track at many points and threatened two bridges.

Moreover, after derailment of Ekota Inter city express train near Balashi on July 16 the railway authority decided to shift Teestamuk ghat at Fulchhari point which was abandoned during the last dry season. Train communication with the capital city resumed fully from Saturday last through Fulchhari ghat.

When contacted with Gaibandha District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer, he told The Daily Star, this time flood ravaged 36 unions in four thanas including Gaibandha panchayat.

More than 945 people were affected by flood water. Surging water damaged standing crops on 648 hectares of lands, 1.25 kilometres of embankment and 500 dwelling houses in the district.

The government, meanwhile, allocated cash Taka 50,000, 50 metric tons of rice, 400 pieces of Sari and Lungi for distribution among the flood affected people.

Our Rangpur Correspondent said, The Teesta flood protection embankment at Gangachhara has been threatened following devastating erosion of the river during the last one week.

The Water Development Board (WDB) is trying to protect the embankment from erosion by spur works and sand bags and concrete block dumpings along the danger point of the embankment at Dhamur-Singimari area, a WDB engineer said.

During the past few days a vast tract of land across 31 maujas of seven unions in Gangachhara thana were hit by flood and erosion of the river. At least 349 families were hit by the calamity rendering about 1,000 persons homeless. The worst affected areas are — Pamtamari, Char Nohali, Bairati, Paschim Kachua of Nohali union and Char Chilakkhal, Char Bin-Bina, Char Matukpur, Panner Par in Kolkond union and Alal par. Bilal para, Kandebe, Chat Mornia, and Norsingha maujas in Mornia union, according to Gangachhara Thana Nirbahi Officer Abdur Razzak.

Eyewitnesses said, the 'marginal dykes' which were constructed earlier by the WDB to protect the main embankment of the river were already devoured. About 20 to 25 feet areas of the main embankment were eroded by the river. As such a serious situation on Friday last the WDB officials, with voluntary help of the local people, succeeded to halt damage in the main embankment, villagers said. About Taka eight lakh have been spent in the protection work.

It may be noted that, there are seven danger points at the main embankment in Dhamur-Singimari area where the river erosion has been halted due to massive protective measures. But more strong protective measures are needed immediately.

Experts said, if the main embankment at Dhamur-Singimari area is damaged, the river will start flowing through Manosh tributary towards Rangpur town. This will cause a great danger for the residents of Rangpur town as flood and erosion of the river Teesta will hit the town. The river is at present about 12 miles off Rangpur town.

There are allegations that during the past 25 years, the WDB had spent several crores of taka in protection work along the 11-km long embankment from Lakhitari to Nohali union in Gangachhara thana. Elite of the affected areas alleged, WDB never comes forward to execute protective schemes during the dry season.

But they become active in the rainy season when the river swells by flood water and the devastation of erosion starts in full swing. A WDB source said that due to non-allocation of fund by the government, they had failed to execute protection schemes.

It may be recalled here that vast areas of Mornia, Lakhari, Tari, Alambeditor, Nohali and

Gajaghanta unions in Gangachhara have already eroded by the river Teesta during the past few years.

There are at least 5,000 erosion victims who are passing their days in inhuman condition. They are residing on the embankment in thatched and half broken kutcha shelters for years together. Many other erosion victims have taken shelter at the houses of their relatives, it has been gathered.

Gangachhara Thana Nirbahi Officer said, if the government does not allocate required fund for rehabilitation work, the destitutes cannot be shifted from the embankment.

But, it is surprising that many government heads had visited Gangachhara and assured proper rehabilitation of the destitutes, but nothing tangible was done as yet, it was alleged by the victims.

Due to lack of proper shelters, source of earnings, medicine and other amenities, the erosion and flood victims in Gangachhara thana have been facing untold sufferings. Many victim families have resorted to begging for survival. Every year diseases break out in epidemic form among the destitutes. As a result many of them have died without any treatment.

This year also many ill-fated families have turned destitute due to current flood and erosion of the river Teesta at Gangachhara thana area. They joined with the old destitutes along the embankment.

Jute output target may be hampered in Sarishabari

JAMALPUR, July 21: The target of jute production may not be achieved in Sarishabari thana here during the current season due to low price of the cash crop in the market, reports UNB.

Agriculture Extension officials said the target of jute cultivation in the thana during the current season has been fixed at 2,700 hectares of land including local variety on 1500 hectares.

A jute grower said the overall production of jute in the thana declined during the last three years despite a slight increase last year. The growers are cultivating the crop mainly for household consumption and for fuel wood.

Local traders and growers said they face serious problem in marketing their produce as the purchasing centres of five companies denied to buy more jute than their target fixed earlier.

They appealed to the government to increase the purchasing centres in the thana and raise the volume of jute purchase.

The farmers said they are facing serious setback with the low price and are unable to even get the production cost back. Middlemen are active in all the markets eating up the fruits of their hard labour, alleged some jute growers.

2 killed in Pabna road accident

ISHURDI, July 21: Two passengers were killed and 16 others injured in a road accident at Madpur on Pabna-Nagarbari highway on July 13, reports BSS.

Police sources said the accident occurred when a passenger bus bound for Sirajgonj collided head-on with a speeding truck coming from opposite direction.

One Mustak, 27, died on the spot and another person who was injured seriously died on way to Pabna Hospital.

Sixteen passengers were injured, three of them seriously. They were admitted to Pabna Hospital.

Smuggling of Indian goods rises along border areas

JAMALPUR, July 21: The businessmen here are doing brisk business of contraband Indian goods despite the operations against it by the law enforcement agencies, reports UNB.

Smuggling in the bordering areas is rampant and a number of Indian goods are being sold in various markets along the border areas without much restriction.

Organised syndicates of smugglers are bringing in various types of wine, cannabis, phenisidyl syrup, low quality crude salt, sugar, pulses, saree, cosmetics, bi-cycle, motor cycle parts and other goods from India while smuggling old gold, poultry, fish, dried fish, fertilizer, refined milk and edible oil from Bangladesh.

Local people alleged, Indian

goods are being sold openly in some markets including Guthali Bazar in slampata thana and Sanandabari Bazar in Dewanganj thana.

The business of phenisidyl syrup is going on unabated at Pingna and Jagannathanj ghat in Sarishabari thana.

In the town, a section of poor women are involved in trading Indian saree to the customers carrying the contraband item with them. The sugar from beyond the border is also available at every market here, said the local people adding that the rackets are active in and around the railway station.

Police is continuing their operations at different places to seize the contraband items, though there is no sign of declining trend of smuggled goods in the district.

Hemp cultivation on rise in 6 districts of Khulna divn

JESSORE, July 21: Agriculture lands in six bordering districts of Khulna division are increasingly being brought under hemp cultivation with the influx of smuggled hemp seeds from India, reports UNB.

The farmers are increasingly cultivating the contraband instead of crops to earn windfall profit, local people said.

Local leaders alleged that due to negligence of the Drug Control Department in conducting proper raid in the region, the quantum of hemp cultivation land in Jessore, Jhenidah, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Kushtia and

Sathkira is one rise.

A large number of growers in the region are engaged with hemp smuggling violating the government ban on cultivation, selling and use of hemp in the country.

A source of the NCD said they have failed to stop the trading and cultivation after conducting repeated raids in the region as the smugglers are engaged in the business, act with the patronisation of an influential quarter.

A sizable quantity of finished hemp and 4,000 hemp plants were recovered from the six districts during the last one year till June this year, he informed.

Drinking water supply schemes implemented

CHUADANGA, July 21: The Public Health-Engineering Department (PHED) implemented a number of schemes during the last financial year in all the four thanas of Chuadanga district, reports BSS.

The schemes were implemented to ensure supply of pure drinking water in the district.

According to an official source, the implemented schemes included installation of new hand pump tubewells, resinking of disordered hand pump tubewells and installation of Tara pumps.

Of the total new hand pump tubewells, 64 tubewells were installed in Chuadanga sadar thana, 68 in Alamdanga thana, 40 in Damurhuda thana and 12 in Jibannagar thana.

On the other hand of the total disordered hand pump tubewells, 17 were resunk in Chuadanga sadar thana, 21 in Alamdanga thana, 17 in Damurhuda thana and 08 in Jibannagar thana.

Poultry farm owners incur huge losses

NETRAKONA, July 21: The poultry farm owners here have been incurring huge losses since the last few months due to various problems, reports UNB.

The poultry farm owners association sources said, at least 30 per cent poultry birds died due to severe hot spell at different farms across the district causing sharp fall in production egg.

Besides, at least 5,000 poultry birds died for want of proper treatment and required life saving medicine in all the 10 thanas.

Unemployed youths set up the poultry farms to become self-reliant, but their enthusiasm is decreasing gradually due to incurring of losses.



GAIBANDHA: Believe it or not, a miracle happened at village Keshalidanga in Sadullahpur thana recently. A duck laid an egg with Arabic word Muhammad (SM) inscribed on it. A duck of Khokan Chandra Das of village Keshalidanga in Sadullahpur thana laid the egg. According to his opinion, it was the first egg of the duck. Hundreds of villagers visited his house. Many of them wanted to buy the egg. Some people offered Taka 100. The owner took the egg to Gaibandha town and showed it to local journalists. Imam of the local mosque opined, the word is as like as Arabic Mohammed. Owner of the egg, however, denied to sell the egg. — Star photo

Some owners said high prices of poultry feeds and various epidemic diseases have forced them to close their farm in the last few months. Besides, the government patronisation for the poultry farming was not satisfactory.

Sontosh Kumar Nath, a local livestock officer said the poultry birds can withstand temperature only up to 37 degree Celsius but the temperature in the belt fluctuated between 38 and 42 degree Celsius during the current month.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to save the ancient historic mosque from ruination.

Training course for journalists concludes

MYMENSINGH, July 21: A two-day training course for the journalists on 'Human Rights and Women Issue' ended at the local ADAB office here on Friday, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha Mymensingh chapter organised the training to create awareness among the journalists working in the rural areas where repression on women is rampant.

Various issues of women's and human rights were discussed in the training, participated by a total of 21 journalists working for different national and local newspapers.

The concluding ceremony was addressed, among others, by columnist Abed Khan, women's movement leader Bela Nabi and Executive Director of Nari Progati Sangha Rokeya Kabir.

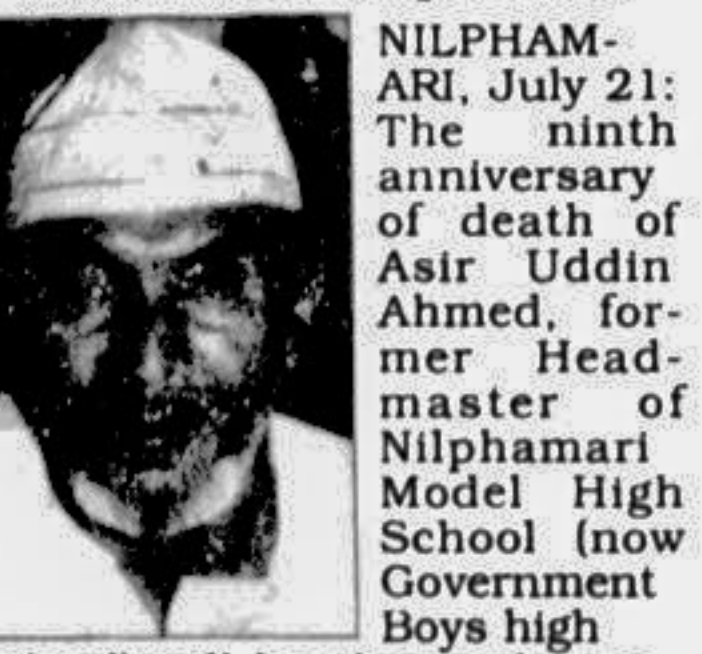
Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Shafigul Islam distributed certificates among the trainees.

Later, Executive Director of the Shanga Rokeya Kabir visited Ambia Khatun who was undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Ambia, a school girl, was admitted to the hospital last month with serious acid burn injuries.

Asir Uddin Ahmed's anniversary of death

From A Correspondent



NILPHAM-ARI, July 21: The ninth anniversary of death of Asir Uddin Ahmed, former Headmaster of Nilphamari Model High School (now Government Boys High school) will be observed tomorrow (Wednesday).

Asir Uddin Ahmed, a noted educationist of the northern region earned name and fame as a dedicated headmaster.

On the occasion a milad mahfil will be held at 'Maricha Garden' Indira Road residence of his son S I M Khaleque Davd. It is worth mentioning, Shaheed Capt Bashar, a distinguished martyr of the Liberation War of Bangladesh was his eldest son.



BARISAL: Local unit of Jatiya Kabita Parishad brought out a colourful rally here recently in observance of birth centenary of Poet Jibananda Das. — Star photo

'Save 300-yr-old Parobarbarpur Mosque from destruction'

From Abu Ahmed

SATHKHIRA, July 21: The 300-year-old historic 'Parobarbarpur Mosque' still stands as a historic symbol in the district.

King Pratapaditya's Pathan army chief Subedar Parobar Khan built this mosque for the Muslim soldiers. It was named 'Parobarbarpur Mosque' after his name. According to historians, Dhulihar Pargana (now under Kalighat) thana of Sathkira district including eastern areas of the Indian river, Hooghly was under Muslim rule during the 15th century.

The historic mosque is now filled with bush due to lack of care for a long time. Beasts have taken shelter there and hundreds of trees have grown up near the mosque.

In 1965, a pious man Alhaj Sohrab Ali of village Mukundapur in Kalighat thana renovated the mosque to make it suitable for prayers.

Measurement of the area outside the mosque is 52 feet point five inches by 39 feet point eight inches. The ten-door mosque has one tomb while there are three more tombs in its verandah. The walls are five feet nine inches to seven feet.

There are three ornamented

Mehrar on the western wall inside the mosque. Besides, there are attractive ornamentations in a shape of flags at the junction of the outer lines of each Mehrar.

Beautiful creeps designs are found at the end of the frame. According to historians, this mosque has an architectural similarity with Atia Mosque of Tangal established in 1608. The Shahi Mosque of Narayanganj, Chumki Mosque of West Bengal, India and Loton Mosque are comparable to this mosque, as well.

According to Persian Parwana, Mughal Fauzdar Nurullah Khan who was a close relative of Emperor Aurangzeb appointed Syed Kashmir of village Parbarpur as caretaker of the mosque and donated a plot of 50 bighas of land. History says, one of the Bengal Awliya Hafez Maulana Abu Zafar Muhammad Alamgir Aurangzeb with a hope to avail heaven ordered Subedar Parobar Khan to build this mosque for saying prayers for Muslim soldiers serving in the area.

In 1938, Bengal Wakf Commissioner declared the mosque as Wakf Property and named it 'Nurullah Khan Wakf Estate'.

In course of time, three tombs of the verandah of the mosque has been covered with bushes and were ruined. Two pillars were also damaged later on. The Department of Architecture took this mosque and spent a sum of Taka 10 lakh for the reconstruction of the ancient mosque, made of terrakota bricks.

The ancient mosque with its surrounding property have been brought under dispute. Allegations say that the then British Government's Nayeab Karkoon Kazi Noor Mohammad took this property from the mosque Sebais and made a Kobia deed after his wife's name Musammat Azamatunnesa.

The mosque and the property was recorded in her name in 1942. The members of the family of Syed Kashmir claimed the mosque as their family property. Meanwhile, 50 bighas of land have been grasped by them and only three acres of land is now under possession of the mosque.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to save the ancient historic mosque from ruination.

Steps sought to stop toll collection at higher rate

NETRAKONA, July 21: Small vendors and poor farmers of different hats and bazaars of the district have been suffering for long due to collection of toll at a higher rate than fixed by the government, reports UNB.

They alleged that the lease holders with a tacit support from a section of unscrupulous officials have been collecting tolls at a higher rate from both the buyers and sellers at the market places.

Traders of different markets including Bruzer Bazar, Tallgati, Avoy Passa, Nazirganj, Bakharhat, Kendua Sadar, Sahipur, Purbadaha, Goatola, Lapsia and Balal alleged that they had to give tolls three to four times higher than the rate fixed by the government.