

News snaps

Ideal village for landless families

CHUADANGA, Sept 12: The government will establish a new 'ideal village' at Chilla in Damurhuda thana for the rehabilitation of 90 landless families, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the government has sanctioned Taka 10,02,000 for the construction of finished houses, Taka 1,62,214 for the construction of a community centre and 270 bundles of CI sheets for the project. The construction work of the ideal village is progressing. Meanwhile, 84 out of 90 landless families have been selected for rehabilitation in the new ideal village.

BRDB to disburse loan among destitutes

PIROJPUR, Sept 12: Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) will disburse Tk 6.65 crore loan among the destitute people of the district during the current fiscal year, reports UNB.

Of the total, Tk 80 lakh will be disbursed in Mathbaria, Tk 70 lakh in Bhandaria, Tk 1.80 crore in Swarupkathi, Tk 65 lakh in Kaukhali, Tk 1.25 crore in Sadar and Tk 60 lakh in Indurkani. The loan will be distributed among 21,681 members of 867 Samities against various schemes to make them self-reliant. The schemes included animal husbandry, bamboo and cane industries, cultivation of vegetables, poultry farm, pisciculture and nursery.

Workshop on narcotics legislation

MYMENSINGH, Sept 12: A day-long workshop on narcotics legislation was held at the auditorium of the district council here on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Narcotics Control Department and United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP) jointly organised the workshop, presided over by Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Islam. Stressing the need to solve the drug abuse problem, speakers at the workshop said the country has flooded with drugs but it is not possible to solve this problem by merely enacting law. They also urged all to launch a social movement against the drug abuse. The workshop was addressed, among others, by Director General of Narcotics Control Department Nazmul Ahsan Chowdhury, Additional Deputy Inspector General of Police Maitiur Rahman and UNIDCP Chief Coordinator Khandaker A Hamid.

Smuggled goods seized

SATKHIRA, Sept 12: Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled goods worth about Tk 5.66 lakh from the border areas of the district on Monday and Tuesday, reports UNB.

Acting on secret information, the jawans raided the different areas and seized the goods while being brought into the country. The seized goods included saree, sugar, cosmetics, spices, imitation ornaments and by-cycle parts. The goods were deposited with the Customs godown and separate cases were filed with the police.

3 killed in road accident

PABNA, Sept 12: Three persons died in a microbus accident last week near Sirajganj circuit house in Sirajganj district, according to a report reaching here, reports BSS.

Eyewitnesses said the Bogra-bound microbus while crossing a Bailey bridge on the outskirts of Sirajganj district town skidded off the road and fell into water of a ditch. Three persons died on the spot and several others were injured. Two of the three victims were identified as Zahurul Islam and Nannu Miah. The injured were admitted to Sirajganj sadar hospital.



SHERPUR: Acute fodder scarcity prevails in the flood affected district where the grazing fields are under water for the last three months. In the picture Ratan Mia, 10, feeding his goats on board a boat in a flooded jute field. — Star photo by Ratan Chowdhury

3 alleged terrorists arrested

MAGURA, Sept 12: Police nabbed three alleged terrorists and recovered a motorcycle from their possession from PTI Para in the town on Saturday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of police led by an SI raided the house of Shaheb Ali and arrested Babul, Shaheb Ali and Faruk. A stolen 100 CC Yamaha motorcycle was also recovered from their possession. The arrested in their confessional statements admitted their involvement in the motorcycle hijacking incident.

Erosion threatens vast area in Zokiganj

SYLHET, Sept 12: A vast area in Zokiganj thana of the district has been threatened due to severe erosion in the river Kushlira, reports UNB.

At least 15 villages have been facing threat of extinction due to the erosion, said the local officials and villagers. They said the river erosion is changing the geographical boundary of the country in the bordering area. The worst-affected villages are Alamshid, Shahidabad, Narasinghpur, Uzirpur, Biresore, Sherulbagh, Bhuyyanpara, Manikpur and Gangajal. Zokiganj thana headquarters is also affected by the erosion. The river devoured thousands of dwelling houses and a vast area of crop land leaving the people landless in absence of substantial step to check the erosion. The people have demanded of the government to take effective measures to check the erosion immediately.

Separate incidents claim 2 lives

KUSHITIA, Sept 12: Two people were killed in the district, one by the miscreants and another in a road accident, reports UNB.

Police said Abdus Sattar Fakir, 50, a suspected member of an outlawed party, was abducted and shot dead by a group of armed men at Chowrang Bazar High School ground in Kumarkhali thana of the district on Thursday night. The abductors are reportedly the members of another outlawed group. The body was brought to Kushitia General Hospital where the autopsy was performed. A case was lodged with the police. Meanwhile, a man was killed and four others were injured when a passenger bus turned turtle on Friday afternoon at Charmile on Kushitia-Ishwardi road. The victim was identified as Habibur Rahman, 50. The injured were admitted to the General Hospital here.

Lightning claims 3 lives

BAGERHAT, Sept 12: Three persons were killed by lightning in two separate incidents at sadar and Fakirhat thana of Bagerhat district last week, reports BSS.

Local people said Bashir Sheikh, 32, and another labourer of village Kalkalia under Fakirhat thana were working in a shrimp farm in the rains when a thunderbolt hit them and they died on the spot. In another incident, Nuruzzaman, 21, of Bemorta village under sadar thana was killed by lightning when he was working in the field.

Girl rescued

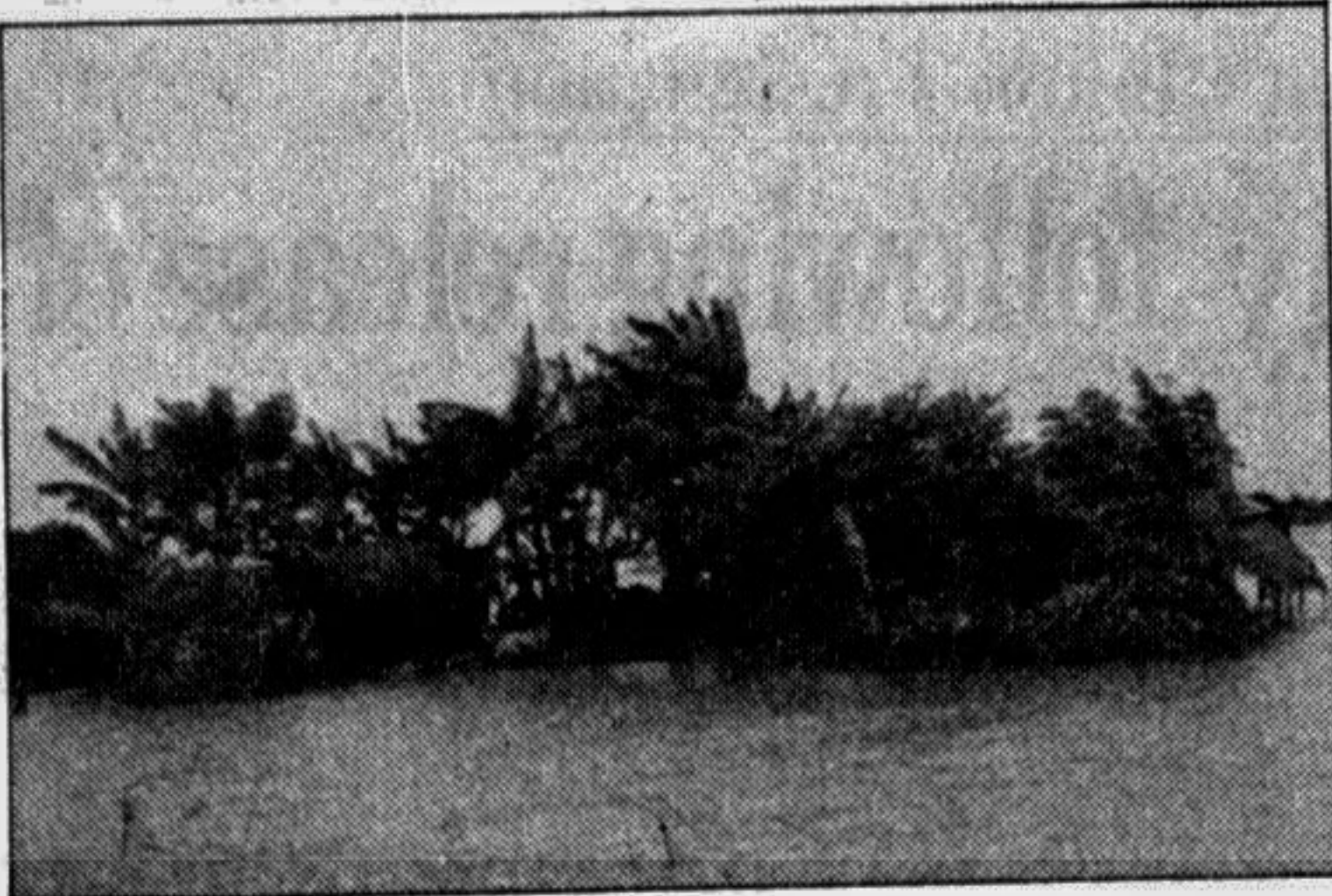
NAOGAON, Sept 12: Police rescued a teenage girl after about 36 days of her abduction from Sultanpur area of the town on Thursday night, reports UNB.

According to police, the victim Rita Banu, student of class VII of Keertipur High School in sadar thana and daughter of late Abul Hossain of Gobindapur village was abducted by her neighbour Taher Uddin Fakir on July 27. Police acting on secret information rescued the victim and arrested Fakir.

100-bed Nursing hospital yet to be opened

NARSINGDI, Sept 12: The 100-bed district hospital constructed at a cost of about Tk 7 crore is yet to be opened for public due to alleged negligence of the authority, reports UNB.

Local sources said the opening of the hospital is being delayed as no decision was given by the ministry concerned regarding the appointment of staff members, buying furniture and other medical equipment. Bureaucratic complacency is responsible for the delay they added. The hospital project was taken under Public Works Department at Bashali in Sadar thana on five acres of land during the fiscal 1996-97 and its construction was completed at the beginning of this year. Apart from the two-storey building, the hospital has also residential quarters for doctors, technicians and staff and two units for the nurses.



BARISAL: Submerged dwelling houses in Mehendiganj look like an island in a river. — Star photo



RANGPUR: Flood water has totally engulfed the Uttar Majhipara area in Chilmari thana of Kurigram district. — Star photo



MAGURA: Standing sugarcane have been inundated by flood water in Sripur thana of the district. — Star photo

5,000 affected by diarrhoea in Chandpur: Flood situation improving in N-districts

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Sept 12: Flood situation has taken a devastating turn in the district due to continuous downpour and alarming rise in water level in the rivers Meghna, Padma, Dakatia and Dhanagoda.

In Chandpur the flood situation has deteriorated for the third time this year.

At Chandpur the Meghna has already reached the highest peak by breaking all previous records. In 1988 the highest record of water level was 108 cm. This year's flood water level exceeded 62 cm above the danger level.

The entire Chandpur town is now under 3 to 4 feet flood water. All roads, houses, offices, shops, markets, industries and educational institutions have been inundated.

All residents of ground floors and houses are busy in leaving their houses in search of safer places.

About 200 shelter camps have been opened in the district. About 4 lakh people have taken shelter in the camps. All five municipal areas of the district town have been inundated. Chandpur bus station has been submerged.

All communications with Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Comilla and other districts have been snapped.

Chandpur and Ichal ferry ghats have been submerged.

Flood situation is very grim in Haziganj, Chandpur sadar and Shastrasi thanas of the district. So far 60 people died by flood. According to flood control room sources, about 15 lakh people of district have been affected by flood. Chandpur Town Protection Embankment has been inundated.

As a result Chandpur rail station has been submerged at several points. The Taka 100-crore Chandpur Irrigation Project is threatened as the embankment is partially eroded. If the embankment is eroded completely the entire project area with a population of three lakh will be submerged. The Taka 120-crore Meghna-Dhanagoda Irrigation Project is also threatened. Many crabs have been developed at several points of the embankment.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) officials are trying hard to protect the embankment by dumping sand bags.

So far government has sanctioned Taka 20 lakh in cash and three thousand metric tons of rice for the affected people.

Diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases have been broken out in the affected areas. So far 5,000 people have been affected by diarrhoea.

About 40 thousand people are marooned in different shoal areas of the district. About 10 thousand people have taken shelter on Chandpur Irrigation Project Embankment.

According to the Civil Surgeon of Chandpur, at present 120 medical teams are working in the affected areas.

Scarcity of pure drinking water in both municipal and rural areas has been reported.

Almost all the tubewells have been submerged. Oral saline and water purifying tablets are not available in the hospitals.

Everyday about 3 hundred diarrhoeal patients are admitted in Matlab ICCDR, B hospital.

Our Rajshahi correspondent reports: Flood water from the river padma has been entering into the city through holes in the Town Protection Dam. People are going away to safer places from the riverside areas fearing collapse of the dam at any time.

The district administration banned plying of all kinds of vehicles along Rajshahi-Dhaka highway near the dam. All flood affected people who have taken shelter near and on the dam have also been asked to leave with all their belongings. They have been asked to take shelter in nearby flood camps. The dam has become wet, soft and muddy. A huge number of police and army have been deployed to protect the dam. They have been assisted by local people who are working hard day and night to protect the dam.

The City Corporation has cancelled leaves of all officials and workers for an indefinite period.

Meanwhile, the sight of dead bodies of men and cattle is a common sight now in flood water.

Sufferings of the flood-hit people have mounted further for rains and lack of food and medicine.

Rajshahi University has been declared closed for 17 days from September 10. The decision has been taken due to continued aggravating situation of flood.

Rajshahi-Charghat-Bagha and Rajshahi-Godagari roads have been inundated at several places. More fresh areas have been inundated in Godagari, Rajpara, Boalia, Polas, Charghat and Bagha thanas.

In Chapainawabganj the Ruhul Dam has broken down. All normal administrative functions of the district administration have been collapsed.

The dam alongside the Chhoto Jamuna river has broken down at Badalgachi in Naogon snapping road communications of the district headquarters with the thana headquarters.

Our Rajshahi University Correspondent reports: The historic 'Barakuthi' building of Rajshahi University is on the verge of collapse due to continuous rise in water level of the mighty Padma in recent days. The 'Barakuthi' building on the Padma is very a memorable building because the university started functioning at the initial stage from this building in 1953.

Recent development shows that a number of pillars of the house have already been devoured by the river. Again, the embankment near the building is also under threat of flood water.

The Engineering Department of Rajshahi University has taken steps to protect the historic house from the disaster. They have dropped sandbags beside the building.

Meanwhile, the Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor Prof. Abdul Khaleque and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof. Sayeedur Rahman Khan have visited the site and urged the engineers to work unitedly to save the historic building.

The VC and Pro-VC have also visited the sweepers' colony of the university affected by flood water. They enquired about their problems. The living workers at the colony informed the VC and Pro-VC about their problems. Prof. Khaleque assured them of all possible help to mitigate their sufferings. He also urged them to face the calamity with courage.

In another development, responding to the VC's appeal to help the flood stricken people in the country, Suhrawardy Hall has donated Taka 20,000 while Begum Rokeya Hall has also pledged to donate the same amount of money to the university relief fund.

Our Barisal Correspondent says: Overall flood situation in the southern districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Jhalakathi and Barguna deteriorated again due to continuous rainfall for the last few days and onrush of flood waters.

All the low-lying areas, riverside areas, even many roads in the district headquarters have been inundated.

As the rivers Kirtankhola, Arial Khan, Sandhya, Sugandha Bishali, Paira and Baleswar continued to swell again huge shoal lands and the riverside crop lands including embankment and human

habitations have been submerged causing immense sufferings to lakhs of people of this region.

Nearly one lakh people have been marooned in the sadar Baufal, Galachipa, Kalapara, Mirganj, Dumki and Dhashmina thana areas of the district. Thousands of families have become homeless. Crops and seed-beds on several thousand acres of land have been destroyed.

Purampara, Muslimpara, College Road, Sabujbagh, Sadar road in Patuakhali town area have gone under 3-feet water. This is because there is no town protection embankment. Water level of the Tetulia and Lohalia rivers rose considerably. As a result nearly 15 thousand people of Baufal, Kalajia, Nazirpur, Kauakdia, Dhulia, Kaliswari have been marooned. Red Crescent sources said, several thousand people of Char Andra, Charkazal and Char Biswas of Dashmina thana are still living in the threat of flood and erosion.

Some roads in Jhalakati, Barisal and Barguna town areas have already been submerged. This has created great panic among the town dwellers.

Road communications between Barisal divisional headquarters and the capital Dhaka including the northern districts remained snapped for the last few days. Flood situation in Gournadi Agailjhara, Uzirpur and Babuganj thana areas of Barisal district remained unchanged. Several thousand people in these areas who had taken refuge on the highways earlier have been forced to go elsewhere as the highways also went under 3 to 4-feet water with strong current. Relief distribution is being continued.

Our Khulna correspondent says: Different points of Khulna city have gone under water due to intermittent rain and high tide in Rupsha and Bhairab rivers.

South Tootpara, Jinnahnagar, Rupsha Strand road, Ahsan Ahmed road, Gagan Babu Road and Harintana area have been submerged by rain water.

Meanwhile, 29 villages of Mollah thana and 17 villages of Chitalmari thana have gone under flood water. The river Madhumati has been flowing above the danger level till filling of this report. A total of 24 shiltears have been opened in Chitalmari and Mollahat thanas and 5,000 people have been shifted there.

According to an official source, seven out nine thanas have been badly affected by flood. As many as 1,700 families of 22 villages have become homeless in these seven thanas of Bagerhat district. Four medical teams have been working to provide medical services to the flood victims.

A total number of 1,500 shrimp enclosures of Fakirhat, Mollahat and Chitalmari thanas of Bagerhat district are reported to have been washed away. Standing 'Aman' crops have been completely damaged by flood water. Two educational institutions of Mollahat thana have been washed away by erosion of the river Madhumati.

The government has so far allotted 11 metric tonnes of rice and 5,000 taka in cash for the

flood affected people of the district. Measures have also been taken to prevent water-borne diseases.

Meanwhile, 24 villages in Bataghate thana of Khulna district have been inundated due to swelling water of the Kazibacha river damaging crops worth over two crores of taka.

Our Rangpur correspondent reports: The current deluge has caused colossal damages to crops, homesteads, houses, roads, embankments, bridges, culverts and other installations across 16 northern districts. A latest information said, about six crore people in five thousand unions under 128 thanas of these districts have been affected by the deluge.

The standing 'Aman' crop on a vast tract of land, more than 10 thousand dwellings houses, 5 thousand kilometres of pucca and kutcha roads, hundreds of bridges and culverts have been either completely or partially damaged so far, according to a preliminary estimate.

In greater Rangpur zone, flood situation has been gradually improving excepting Gaibandha district where the situation is still grave due to further rise in water level in the Brahmaputra, Ghaghot and Teesta rivers.

In Rangpur district, standing crops worth Taka four crore and fifty lakh have been damaged.

Still there are several hundred marooned families in Taragonj thana. Badarganj Bandar Protection Dam has been threatened by flood water. Local people and the thana administration threw sand bags to check erosion of the 'bundh'.

The erosion threat at several points of Bejoy Bundh along the right bank of the river Teesta has been checked by the protection work of WDB aided by the Army jawans and local people.

In Kaunia and Pirgachha thana huge areas are still lying under flood waters. In shoal areas of Haragachh, Saola and Parul unions thousands of families are suffering.

Diarrhoea and water-borne diseases have already broken out in epidemic form across the flood torn areas of greater Rangpur zone. Although the officials did not confirm the deaths, at least 200 persons died so far by the diseases. Thousands are suffering from the diseases.

Thousands of families all over the zone are now facing starvation due to inadequate relief operation, according to allegations received here.

There are apprehensions that a large number of people across the zone will die of starvation if sufficient measures are not taken immediately.

In Lalmonirhat district, thousands of flood-hit people of Mohishkhacha union under Aditmari thana tried to bring out a long march towards the district headquarters in demand of construction of a flood protection bundh along the northern bank of the river Teesta. But their long march bid was halted at Aditmari thana headquarters by a section of activists of a political party.

The demonstrators, however, chanted slogans saying

that we don't want relief, but we need a flood protection bundh at Mohishkhacha union immediately. They alleged that due to lack of a 'bundh', vast areas across the union are inundated every year resulting in colossal damages to crops, homesteads and roads.

They alleged that their demand for a 'bundh' remains unheeded by the authority concerned for a long time.

Our Chuadanga Correspondent says: River Mathabhanga is now flowing above the danger level at several points of Chuadanga, Alamdanga and Damurhuda thanas of the district till filing of this report on Wednesday.

As a result the low-lying areas adjacent to the river of three thanas of the district have been submerged.

According to Chuadanga district flood control room, so far a total of 3,680 people of the three thanas have been affected. Standing 'Aman' paddy, betel leaf fields and vegetables on 2,200 hectares of land have been inundated, 1,110 houses, two roads, two river embankments and two educational institutions have been damaged by the river water.

A high level meeting was held here at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Chuadanga recently to review the flood situation of the district. The DC, M R Chowdhury presided over the meeting. The local MP Shamsuzzaman Dudu was also present in the meeting.

The Chuadanga District Flood Control Room sources further said, so far the low-lying areas of Chuadanga sadar thana, two roads of Chuadanga Poursava, 10 unions of Alamdanga thana, 2 wards of Alamdanga Poursava and six unions of Damurhuda thana which are adjacent to the river Mathabhanga have been submerged by flood water.

The district administration has so far distributed 3,600 taka, 10 sarees and 10 lungies among the flood victims of Chuadanga Poursava and Alokdia union of Chuadanga Sadar thana which is quite inadequate to meet the demands of flood victims.

Our Kushtia correspondent adds: Heavy rainfall has paralysed the normal life and activities of the people of Kushtia town. It mounted miseries of the affected people.

Army have been deployed to protect the flood protection

embankment. Heavy rain has submerged all roads of Kushtia town. Roads in front of Kushtia General Hospital including the hospital premises have gone under knee-deep to waist-deep water. All other roads like Khodadakh Road, Arjundas Agarwalla Street, SC Chatterjee Road, Majampur Gate, Housing Estate area, Kalisankarpur have been submerged.

Meanwhile sufferings of the flood affected people who have taken shelter on the high land and who are living under open sky or make-shift structures have increased manifold.

Minister of State for Relief and Rehabilitation visited the flood affected areas of Kushtia and assured all possible help to the flood stricken people. Meanwhile, relief materials so far distributed by the district administration is too inadequate to meet the demand.

Diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases have broken out in an epidemic form in the flood affected areas but no medical team has reached the affected places till filing of this report on Thursday.

Prices of essential commodities have gone high in the flood affected areas. Many non-government organisations have distributed relief goods among the flood victims.

Road communication between Kushtia and Dhaka has remained suspended. No daily newspaper has reached Kushtia form Dhaka during the last few days. Flood related deaths have risen to 200 unofficially, while the local Deputy Commissioner (DC) confirmed only 2 deaths. The DC confirmed that more areas have been inundated due to breaches in the flood protection embankment at various places of the district.

Shilaidaha Kuthibari, once the house of the great poet Rabindranath Tagore has also gone under water. A total of 64 shelters have been opened to accommodate about 50 thousand affected people in the district. Local people demanded opening of gruel kitchen in the shelters, but the govt have failed to do so causing untold sufferings to the affected people.

The affected people need immediate dry food for their survival but such food has not been provided in the affected areas by the government. Syed Mahedi Ahmed Rumi MP, Ahsanul Haq Molla MP, and Prof. Shahidul Islam MP, have protested the mismanagement in distribution of relief goods.

No relief material reached, complain flood victims

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Sept 12: The flood stricken people here have been suffering seriously due to manifold problems including dearth of daily necessities in the local markets, reports UNB.

A number of flood victims complained that they are not getting any relief material and are starving for days together.

Prices of essential commodities including rice, pulse, onion, garlic, chilli, vegetables, oral saline and kerosene have shot up in different rural markets as well as in the towns.

The traders attributed the cause of the price spiral to the shortage of supply due to the prolonged and devastating floods now sweeping the country.

The prices of polythene sheets as well as its sale have

Diarrhoea claims 20 lives in Habiganj

HABIGANJ, Sept 12: Diarrhoea that broke out in the flood-hit areas of the district claimed 20 lives during the last two weeks, reports UNB.

More than 2,000 people have also been affected by the water-borne diseases.

Official sources, however, confirmed the death of only four people.

Medical sources said the number of diarrhoea and dysentery patients is increasing rapidly everyday due to intake of contaminated water and malnutrition. Besides, scarcity of oral saline packets is acute in the affected areas.

It is also alleged that crisis of oral saline packets at the local health care centres and its high price at black markets aggravated the situation.

gone up in all parts of the district. Poor people who are without any shelter use the sheets in their slums.

Road communications with the district remained suspended for about two weeks causing serious problem for the people.

The road link between the district headquarters and all the thana headquarters have also been snapped. Most of the areas in Nawabganj, Shibganj and Gomostapur thana went under flood water.

The distressed people are rushing to different embankments, high lands and flood shelters.

They complained about irregularities in the relief distribution in some unions and alleged that some UP chairmen and members are involved in misappropriating the relief goods.

They said in Uzirpur union of the district, the VGF card holders are receiving 13 kg of foodgrain in a month instead of stipulated 16 kg.

The poor and distressed people have demanded of the authorities to provide them with adequate relief materials side by side taking action against the misappropriation of relief goods.

Tragic

KHULNA, Sept 12: A snake-chamber died from snake bite at Paikgachha pourashava here on Thursday, reports UNB.

The charmer, Nizam, 20, while entertaining the audience was bitten by the poisonous snake in front of a local bus stand. He died on the spot.

The victim used to maintain his livelihood as a snake-chamber.



SYLHET: Prof Habibur Rahman, Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology speaking as chief guest at the discussion meeting arranged in connection with the 80th birth anniversary of late General M A G Osmani, Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation War. The function was arranged by the Osmani Museum, Sylhet while Poet Dilwar presided over. Among others it was addressed by District Bar Association, president Azizul Chowdhury and The Daily Jugabheri Editor Aziz Ahmed Selim. — Star photo