

# The Longest Deluge: Swollen Waters Take Time to Recede

PHOTO FEATURE ON FLOOD



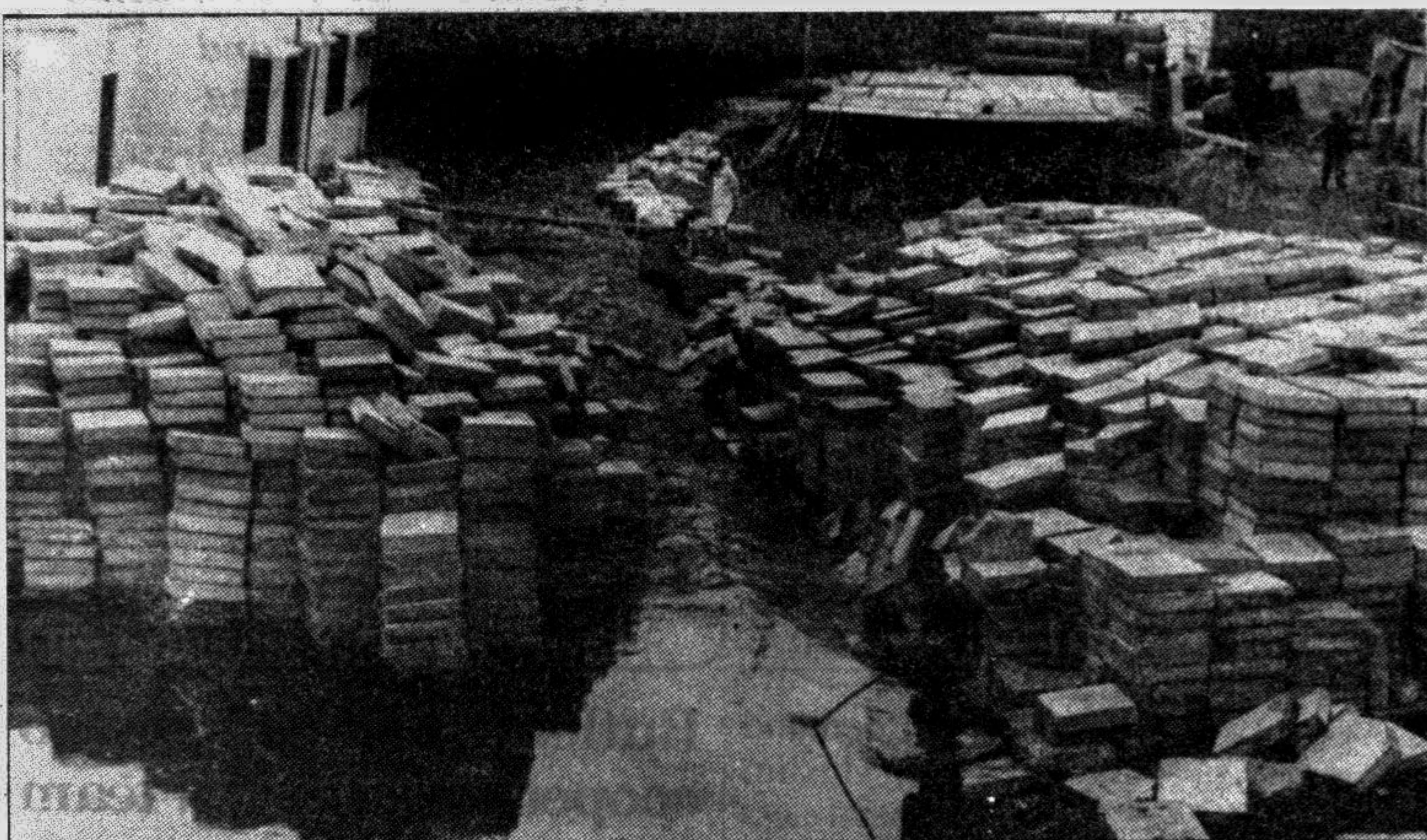
KAMRANGIRCHAR: Relief distribution underway.

—Star photo



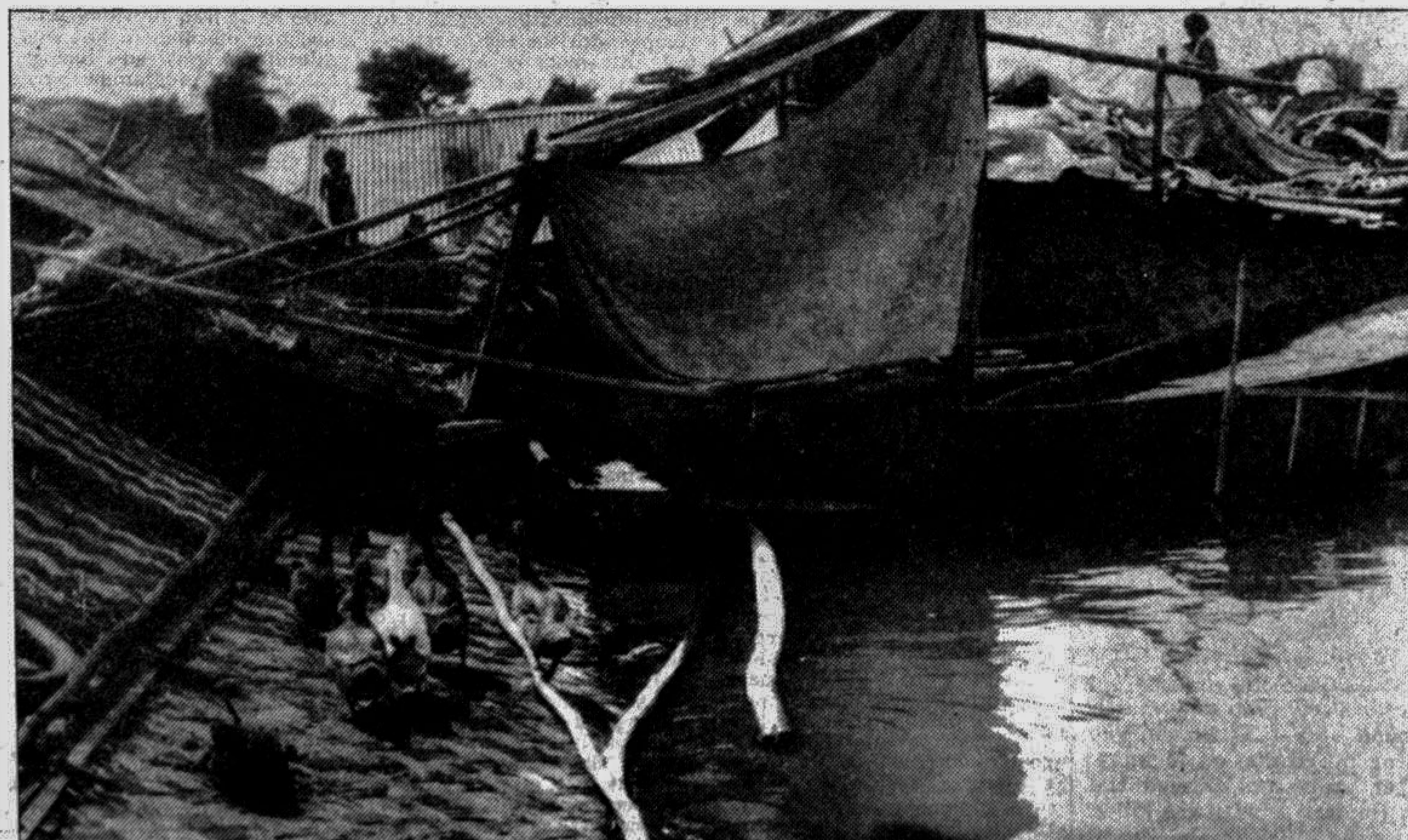
KERANIGANJ: A family with cattlehead on board a boat.

—Star photo



DHOLAIKHAL: Flood water receding.

—Star photo



KAMRANGIRCHAR: Ducks on rooftop.

—Star photo

## Taslima Nasrin back home?

Feminist writer Taslima Nasrin has reportedly returned home secretly after four years of self-exile abroad, reports UNB.

Police yesterday confirmed her arrival in the capital by a Biman flight Monday morning from New York. They said the passenger list of the flight showed one "Nasrin T".

Special Branch police, however, said they are not aware of the present whereabouts of Taslima as "there is no directive from the higher authorities in this regard".

An inmate at Taslima's Shantinagar apartment denied that she returned home along with her parents.

Asked about Taslima's parents, he informed that her mother is sick and went to a clinic. Both Taslima and her father, Rajab Ali, are physicians.

"Had she come into the building, we would have seen her," said Saïdur Rahman, a security guard at the apartment building. The guard was also on duty there when Taslima left the country surreptitiously in 1994.

Two passengers, who were on the same Biman flight from New York, said Taslima wore a burkha after crossing the green channel at Zia International Airport.

Taslima Nasrin left the country in 1994 after cases were filed against her on charges of hurting the religious sentiments through her writings. Several "fundamentalist" groups also announced jihad (crusade) against her.

The groups again threatened to build up movement if Taslima is not arrested immediately and put on trial. They brought out several small processions in the city yesterday and called for staging a demonstration on Friday.

## Rubel Murder Case DB constable arrested from Netrakona

NETRAKONA, Sept 15: Police arrested an absconding accused in the Rubel Murder Case from his Atpara residence here today, reports BSS.

Mohammad Kamrul Hasan, a constable of the Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, was absconding since the murder of Rubel in DB custody on July 23.

Police said a team of Atpara police cordoned off the residence of Kamrul in the early hours of today and arrested him with a warrant of arrest from the court of Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate.

The constable was produced before the court of a local magistrate from where he was sent to jail hajat.

## Customs duty on power tiller exempted

The government has exempted customs duties from power tiller and its spare parts to facilitate the post-flood rehabilitation programme, reports BSS.

This facility, given by the government with immediate effect in view of the worst flood in decades this year, will continue till June 30, 1999, an official press release said in the city yesterday.

The government had given this facility to encourage the use of machine in cultivation due to deaths of a large number of livestock as well as scarcity of fodder.

## Section 144 in Cox's Bazar town

CHITTAGONG, Sept 15: The authorities today imposed Section 144 in Cox's Bazar town after fierce clashes between rival political parties that left seven people wounded, reports UNB.

The clash erupted when opposition BNP and Jamaat supporters allegedly attacked a procession of ruling Awami League that was demanding the arrest of killers of its leaders.

Awami League alleged during the trouble police arrested four people along with firearms, but Jamaat activists snatched them from the law enforcers.

## Train services in 3 western zone routes resume tomorrow

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 15: Train services in three routes in the western zone of Bangladesh Railway will resume tomorrow after an 11-day suspension due to the devastating flood, reports APB.

Railway sources said train services in the Sirajganj-Iswardi, Sirajganj-Khulna and Rajshahi-Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge Station (East) routes were suspended from September 7 as soil underneath the tracks was washed away by flood waters.

## Ruti making project of BFUJ, DUJ

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) will jointly start ruti making and distribution project of the journalists community today at 10 am in the National Press Club premises, reports BSS.

## Starr's probe into Lewinsky affair cost \$4.4 m

WASHINGTON, Sept 15: President Bill Clinton's denial in January of a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky cost more than the personal embarrassment of Kenneth Starr's report. Taxpayers will foot a bill of at least 4.4 million dollars, reports AP.

Starr has provided that figure as the preliminary estimate of what his independent counsel's office spent over the past eight months investigating the Lewinsky affair and alleged cover-up.

The figure — which doesn't include the costs the administration bore fighting legal battles that delayed Starr, the future costs of witness reimbursements or the other aspects of Starr's investigation — may become a political weapon against the president.

Some already are discussing the possibility that Congress could demand the president pay restitution to cover some of the costs of the investigation as one form of punishment that might also include a vote of censure.

"It's the duty of the Senate to discuss the costs that have been borne by the American people as result of a calculated deception by the president," said Sen. Frank Murkowski, an Alaska Republican, who requested and received the spending estimate from the independent counsel.

"It's up to Mr. Starr to account for it," presidential spokesman Mike McCurry said. "If Mr. Starr thinks that the president should pay, then Mr. Starr should say so."

## 22 killed, 500 huts torched as Bodos, Santhals clash in Assam

GUWAHATI, India, Sept 15: At least 22 people were killed and more than 500 huts torched today in a renewed spurt of tribal violence in Assam, police said, reports AFP.

Police said "hundreds of tribals" were critically wounded in the attacks in the Assam district of Kokrajhar, some 200 kilometers (125 miles) from the state capital Guwahati.

An official from Kokrajhar said about 50 tribals from the Bodo tribe, armed with crude guns, machetes and bows and arrows swooped down on six villages of the rival Santhal tribe today and went on a killing spree.

"At least 18 people were killed and more than 500 homes set ablaze," he told AFP. "The victims were mostly women and children since the men had gone out to work on the fields."

The police official said the Santhals then staged retaliatory attacks on four Bodo villages, killing four people.

The Assam government late today put the army on alert in Kokrajhar to prevent further violence, a spokesman said.

Clashes between Bodos and Santhals for land rights in the Kokrajhar region have claimed some 100 lives over the past two years, the Santhals, a minority tribe, have borne the brunt of the violence.

## Number of undergraduate students on the rise

The number of students in the country's 12 public (government) universities significantly rose in the last ten years while expenditure per student also increased during the period, reports BSS.

The total number of university-level students was 45,317 in 1988 while increased to 67,282 in 1997, which is 46.02 per cent higher than that of 1988.

This was stated in a recent report of the University Grants Commission (UGC) which was placed before the Jatiya Sangsad in its last session.

The UGC report said in 1997 a total of 19374 students studied in the Dhaka University, the highest number among the 12 universities, while the lowest number of 1070 students were in the Khulna University.

The number of female students was in a marginal position, only 24.06 per cent, while in those public universities the male students were in a dominating position, which is 75.94 per cent of the total students.

Last year, the public university authorities spent Taka 31,217 per student for their academic purposes which is 13.67 per cent higher than that of the previous year.

The highest amount, Taka 72,139, was spent for per student of Bangladesh Agricultural University while the lowest Taka 12,385 was for per student of the Islamic University.

Expenditures per student of other universities were, Taka 36,882 for Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Taka 33,817 for Jahangirnagar University, Taka 29,626 for Khulna University, Taka 28,244 for Dhaka University, Taka 25,772 for Rajshahi University, Taka 23,369 for Chittagong University and Taka 21,385 for Shahjalal Science and Technology University of Sylhet.

## 15 get life-term for killing one in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 15: A court here convicted 15 people of homicide and sentenced them to life imprisonment today, reports APB.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Abdul Majid delivered the verdict saying that the convicts would have to pay Tk 5,000 each as fine, and in default, to suffer imprisonment for one more year.

According to the prosecution story, one Entaj Ali of Pencharpara village in Ullapara thana was beaten to death by the accused in 1994 following a dispute over a plot of land.

## One robbed in Dhanmondi area

An architect was robbed of her valuables including money, keys and important professional materials by a group of snatchers when she was passing through the busy Dhanmondi area in the city yesterday evening, reports BSS.

The snatchers riding on an autorickshaw came closer to the architect Zebunnesa Mirza, who was riding on a rickshaw, and suddenly took away her hand bag containing the valuables.

A case was filed with Dhanmondi Thana Monday night in this connection but none was arrested as yet, police said.

## Woman awarded death sentence in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Sept 15: A woman was awarded death sentence on Sunday here for involving a woman in flesh trade and murdering her, reports UNB.

According to the prosecution, in brief, Krishna Pal, 32, of Cox's Bazar district forcibly involved Laila Begum, 28, daughter of Quader Hossain in Teknaf thana to prostitution.

But at a time when she refused to do so Krishna poured acid on Laila mixing with hot water on September 11, 1997. Laila after two days of her fight for life succumbed at a hospital.

Krishna was arrested following a complaint filed against her under Women and Children Repression Act.

After examining the records and witnesses, the District and Sessions Judge M Abdul Gafur awarded the punishment.

Another report from Nao-gaon adds: A man was awarded life-term rigorous imprisonment here for possessing illegal arms.

The accused Ashraful Islam (Belal) was also fined Tk 10,000, in default, to suffer two years' RI more.

The prosecution story, in brief, was that police arrested Belal from village Ratoal in Raninagar thana on June 2, 1996.

After examining the records and witnesses 2nd Special Tribunal Judge M Sazedul Karim delivered the judgment on September 9.

## Japanese experts likely to study water management

A Japanese team of experts is likely to visit Bangladesh soon to study water management and the dredging of rivers, including the Goral and the Jamuna, a veteran parliamentarian of Japan said, Monday reports BSS.

Shin Sakurai, MP, who left the capital Monday, ending his two-day visit to Bangladesh, expressed his desire to be here again and to bring along a team of experts to study water management in Bangladesh and dredging of rivers, official sources said.

Sakurai, vice president of Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary League, also called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and held meetings with a number of ministers, including those of foreign affairs, finance, water resources and post and telecommunications.

Sakurai, an old friend of Bangladesh who was scheduled to be here in June during the opening of Bangabandhu Bridge as representative of Japanese prime minister, had an aerial view of the bridge Sunday.

He also flew over the proposed site of the Ganges multipurpose bridge. He was visibly moved by seeing the plight of the flood affected people, sources added.

## Teenage girl electrocuted in Munshiganj

MUNSHIGANJ, Sept 15: A teenage girl was electrocuted yesterday morning at Uttar Islampur under sadar thana of the district, reports BSS.

According to police, the ill-fated girl Sabina Yasmeen, daughter of Abubus Salam, came in touch with a live electric wire when she was switching on a light in their house under flood waters. She was electrocuted instantly.

## Injured photo journalist in coma

CHITTAGONG, Sept 15: Photo journalist of The Daily Janakantha Mashhur Rahman Badal, who was critically injured by police torture on Monday, was stated to be in coma, reports UNB.

He is being treated at the neuro-surgery ward in Chittagong Medical College Hospital since Monday night. A medical board was formed headed by Prof L A Quaderi for his treatment.

Two other photo journalists — Subhas Karan of Dainik Azadi and Didarul Alam of Daily Life — were stated recovering. But they were under treatment in city clinic.

The photographers were injured when police resorted to baton charge to disperse unruly football fans at Chittagong Stadium on Monday evening.

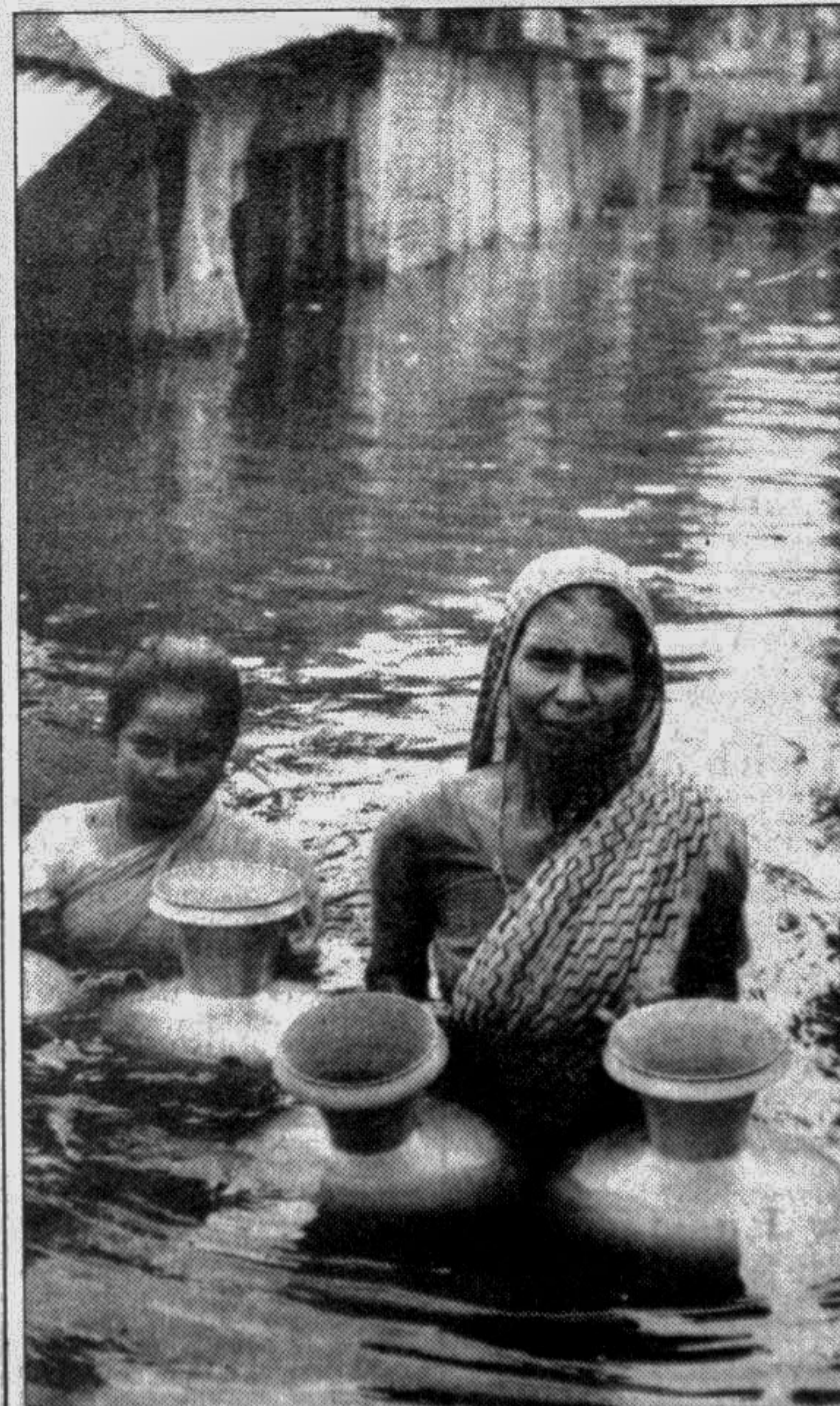
Eight other people injured in the same incident were admitted to the CMCH. Others were given first aid.

Chittagong Union of Journalists and Chittagong press club jointly held a rally at the press club and brought out a silent procession protesting the incident.

Presided over by CUJ president Anjan Kumar Sen, the rally was addressed by editor of the Daily Azadi Prof Mohammad Khaled, Press Club president Abu Sufian, CUJ secretary Nurul Amin and BFUJ vice-president Kazi Zafur Islam.

They condemned the police action and demanded that the responsible policemen be brought to justice.

The journalists' leaders submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister through the Chittagong Divisional Commissioner demanding punishment of the policemen.



MAYAKANAN: In search of safe drinking water.

—Star photo