

News snaps

Call to take up irrigation scheme

NOAKHALI, Sept 20: With the re-excavation of 11 canals for providing irrigation a total of 10 lakh tons of additional paddy could be produced every year in the district, local agri experts said, reports UNB.

According to them, a vast tract of land in Sen Bagh, Begumganj and Chatkhil cannot be brought under irrigation network as 11 canals surrounding the thanas remained silted for years. They said with the re-excavation scheme some 10 square miles of Sen Bagh thana, 20 square miles of Begumganj thana and 10 square miles of Chatkhil thana could be brought under irrigation facilities to produce at least 10 square miles of Sen Bagh thana, could be brought under irrigation facilities to produce at least 10 lakh metric tons of Irri and Boro paddy annually. They appealed to the government to take up the irrigation scheme in the aforesaid areas involving minimum cost to help meet the food deficit of the country and make the district, in particular, food surplus.

Road accidents claim 2 lives

JHENIDAH, Sept 20: Two women were killed and 20 others injured, three of them seriously, in two separate road accidents in Jhenidah sadar and Kalliganj thanas of the district on Thursday, reports BSS.

According to police and eyewitnesses, one accident occurred when a bus collided head-on with a truck from the opposite direction on Jhenidah-Dhaka highway at Gopalpur bazar, under sadar thana. One woman died on the spot. The ill-fate is identified as Rahana Khatun, 29, of village Hudapotea in sadar thana. Twenty persons were injured, three of them rushed to local health complex. Another woman, Asrunnasa, 42, of village Blakhapara in Chougasa thana was crushed under the wheels of a truck on Jhenidah-Khulna highway at Bagpara in Kalliganj thana.

Bodies recovered

BARISAL, Sept 20: Floating on a raft bodies of two unknown persons came to Batamara areas in Muladi thana on Wednesday last, police sources said, reports BSS.

The raft contained burial cloths and some money. A letter was found inside a corked bottle beside the dead. The letter written by the relatives of the dead requested those who would see the raft to bury the bodies at any high place. All the places of Muladi thana along with Batamara had gone under water leaving the people marooned for a long period. The people took shelter at different relief centres set-up at schools and colleges.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Prof. Abdul Khaleque, Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University (C) distributing crest to a student of the Department of Library and Information Science (1st batch) on the occasion of farewell and freshers' reception, held recently at the Kazi Nazrul Islam auditorium. He is flanked by Pro-VC (2nd from left) Prof. Sayedur Rahman Khan, Social Science Dean Prof. Muhammad Mijanuddin (L) and the departmental chairman Muhammad Abdus Salam.

Misappropriation of relief alleged

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 20: BNP leaders on Saturday accused AL leaders of misappropriation and maldistribution of relief materials, reports UNB.

Addressing a press conference, district BNP leader Humayun Islam Khan alleged widespread irregularity and corruption in relief distribution. Allegations were also made of misappropriation of 42 tons of rice and other relief materials given by the Red Crescent for flood victims. He said a memorandum was submitted to the local administration for investigation into the allegations and bringing the culprits to book. Local Awami League leaders however denied the charge.

Housewife beaten to death

RANGPUR, Sept 20: A young housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband over dowry at Ghatbil village in Badarganj thana on Friday, reports UNB.

The victim, identified as Thohura Banu, 18, was being tortured since long for dowry, family sources said adding that the greedy husband Shahbul on the fateful day asked her to bring the money from her poor parents. When she expressed inability he became furious and beat her to death. After the death of the victim he poured poison into her mouth to prove that she committed suicide and went into hiding. Later, police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

197 crimes recorded in 3 months

FENI, Sept 20: Police have recorded 197 crimes during the last three months in the district, reports UNB.

Of these, 66 were recorded in June, 69 in July and the rest 62 in August, said a report sent to the Police Headquarters by the district authorities. The crimes, recorded in six thanas of the district, included 11 murder, 11 robbery, 34 burglary, 12 riot, three abduction, one rape, nine women and child repression, 17 smuggling and 94 other incidents. In August, police recorded 27 crimes in Feni Sadar, nine in Daganbhuuyan, seven in Chhagalnaiya, 11 in Sonagazi, six in Phulgazi and two in Porshuram thana. Besides, some 380 cases were filed with the six thanas during the month of August.

Tk 1.60 cr Chuadanga Jail construction Pt

CHUADANGA, Sept 20: The Chuadanga District Jail will be constructed on an area of eight acres of land at a cost of Taka 12 crore, an official source said, reports BSS.

The government has sanctioned Taka 1.60 crore in the current fiscal year to complete the work of the first phase. This money is being spent for the construction of boundary walls and office-cum-residence of the jailor. The new jail is being constructed by the Public Works Department at Bhemrullah para area of the town. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2005-2004 fiscal year, the source said.

3 unnatural deaths in Rangamati

RANGAMATI, Sept 20: Police recorded incidents of three unnatural deaths that took place in different areas of the district recently, reports BSS.

A four-year-old boy drowned in a pond at Kaukhall thana sadar. He had slipped into water while playing with his friends on the bank of the pond and drowned. Alauddin, 22, driver of a micro-bus died on the spot when his vehicle turned turtle in Rangamati sadar thana, police said. Another person committed suicide allegedly by hanging himself at Chandraghona Mission Hospital area in Kaptai thana. Police recovered the body and sent to Rangamati Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Phensidyl recovered

GOPALGANJ, Sept 20: Police arrested two people and seized a drum containing 37 litre phensidyl syrup from Ulpur bus stand in the town here on Saturday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, police caught red-handed Abul Baten and Abdul Hossain from the bus stand who came from Jessore and recovered the drum along with five bottles of the contraband. The accused were sent to jail custody and a case was registered with the police.

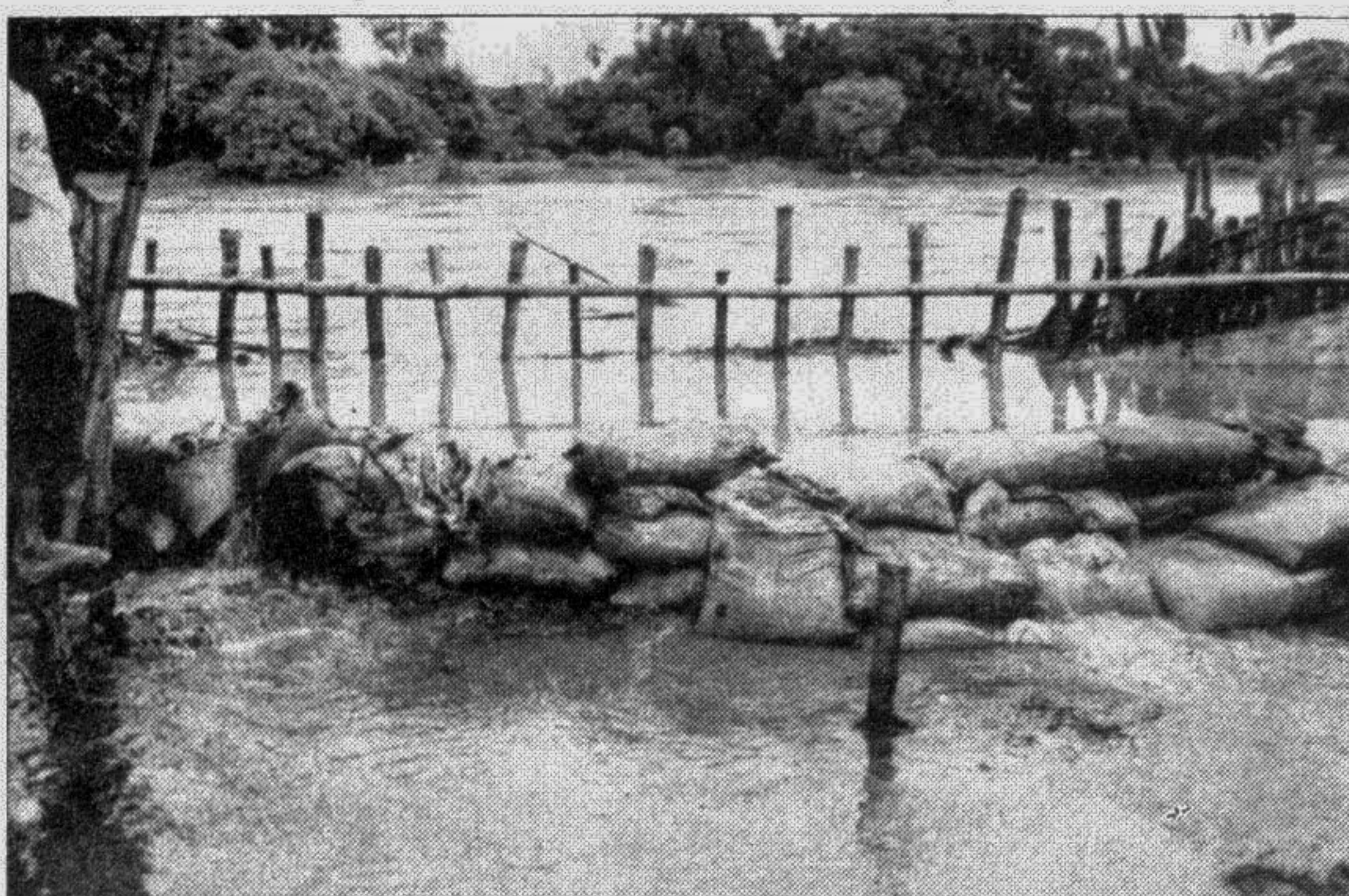
Smuggled goods seized

SYLHET, Sept 20: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in separate drives seized a huge quantity of smuggled goods worth Tk 28.5 lakh in last month, reports UNB.

The goods included valuable timbers, sugar, bidi, medicine and hemp. The smuggled goods were handed over to the Customs Office and Forest Department. Separate cases were filed with the police.



SHERPUR: As flood water starts receding bodies of dead animals are seen floating here and there throughout the district. This picture was taken from a road near Noodirbazar. —Star photo



JAMALPUR: Flood water has washed away a portion of Jamalpur-Madarganj road at Bhabki point. —Star photo

Flood comes as a boon to smugglers

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, Sept 20: The devastating flood has become the cause of immense sufferings to the affected people, but it has brought fortunes to smugglers.

All the border areas of Rajshahi region have been affected by flood seriously. The areas on the other side of the border have also been flooded. Both sides of the border are under waist-to-shoulder-deep water. As a result the physical demarcations of the border have disappeared. This natural disaster has come as a boon to smugglers.

Smuggling along the border areas of Rajshahi is not unusual, but now it has become free and safe.

During the normal period, smuggling was done secretly behind the eyes of members of the law enforcing agencies or making arrangements with some of them. But now the smugglers are not caring the members of the law enforcing agencies. Now they are doing smugglings in guise of relief operations.

Boats and rafts are now the only means to move and carry goods in the flood-hit areas. Everyday many people are searching shelters by boat loaded with their valuables. Relief teams are also seen rushing to the flood-affected people with relief materials loaded in boats. Somewhere traders and buyers

are also using boats to sell and buy goods. None can say which boat belongs to smugglers.

Taking the advantage, the smugglers are freely carrying contrabands across the border day and night.

A BDR official, when contacted, said on condition of anonymity, "we are also victims of flood. Our movements and drives have become limited. In such a circumstance of flood situation it is very difficult to identify contrabands which is troublesome even in normal time."

A police official said, "What can we do if the smugglers say that they are transferring their own goods from the inundated stores or houses, or say that they are carrying relief materials? It is not the time to tussle with people."

Thus the devastating floods have brought fortune to smugglers. Police, however, identified recently such an incident of smuggling in Bagha thana. The smugglers were bringing lentil from India across the Padma.

The police official said, "We could challenge them as they were found in the river. If it occurred in the localities, it would have become difficult for us to suspect and confirm the incidents of smuggling."

Meanwhile, our Gopalganj Correspondent Md Alimuzzaman reports: The flood water

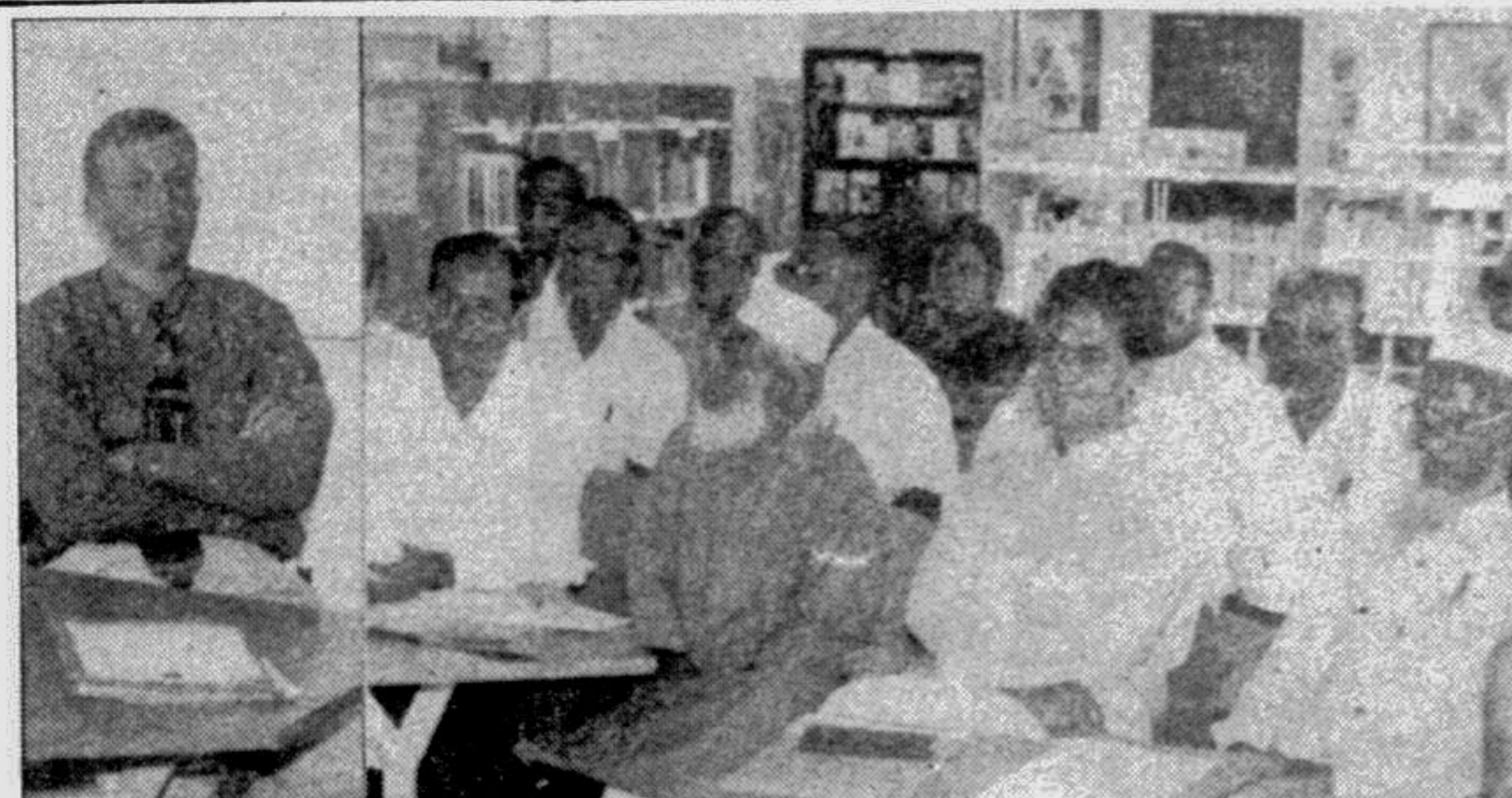
in Gopalganj district has been receding slowly. The water of Modhumati river is down, still 132 cm above the danger level. The environment of Gopalganj town has become very unhealthy.

Gopalganj-Khulna Road near Gobra Madrasa also washed by the flood water of the Modhumati. As a result five hundred families have already become homeless and three hundred acres of land have been devoured by the river. The road communication has been snapped from Gopalganj to southern districts.

The Roads and Highways department (R&H) has been striving hard to restore the road communication network.

According to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital sources, 1,200 diarrhoea patients have been admitted to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital in four days. A total of 93 medical times and 2 Army medical teams have been working throughout the district. Besides various diseases like fever and dysentery have broken out in the flood-hit areas of the district.

Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim local MP with the district level Awami League leaders visited the flood affected areas and distributed relief goods among the victims in different flood shelters.



RAJSHAHI: The British Council recently arranged a divisional review meeting of district primary education officers and PTI Superintendents of Rajshahi division at its Primary English Resource Centre (PERC). Philip Powel Davis, Consultant, PERC presided over the meeting. —Star photo

55 political leaders, workers killed in Narail district in 26 years

NARAIL, Sept 20: A total of 55 political leaders and workers have been killed in the district during the last 26 years and many cases could not be settled due to undue political pressure, reports UNB.

According to official sources, of them eight were union parishad chairmen, two ward commissioners and six student leaders of different political parties.

The murder of Awami League leader Prof. Abu Sufian on December 28, 1972, was recorded as the first political murder here and the trial of the case is still pending.

Since then, Awami League

leader and UP chairman Ruhul Amin, NAP supported labour leader Mahtab Uddin, NAP leader A T M Khalid, student leaders Nur Islam and Shakhawat Hossain Saku, Chairman of Atra Gileola and President-award recipient Sheikh Sirajul Islam, chairman of same UP Sheikh Abdur Rouf, Daulatpur UP Chairman Tabu Kazi, Fulola Dikhla UP chairman Abdur Gofur, Daulatpur UP chairman Habibur Rahman Habib, Khulna Kpilahat-Dumuria-Jhologati chairman Entaz Gazi and Dumuria UP chairman Abdul Majid were murdered by the rival groups.

Besides, most recently Nohati UP chairman Golam Faruk, labour leader Khalilur Rahman and UP member Eyadur Rahman were shot dead.

The sources said among all the murder cases, trials of only two were completed and the rest have been lying pending due to various complications.

On the other hand, the accused people of leftist leader Ratan Sen murder case were acquitted by a court here. Although the case was shifted to Khulna for retrial which is yet to begin.

Other political murders included NAP leader Arun Kumar Saha of Tutupara, Waliur Rah-

Mango sapling costs one life

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Sept 20: A simple mango sapling costs the life of one person at village Uter Sreepur in Sunderganj thana on September 13.

Shamsul Huq of the village picked up a mango sapling from the boundary line of Manjil Ali's plot. Manjil protested the matter. As a consequence a quarrel developed between two groups. Soon the situation went out of control. Supporters of Shamsul attacked the victim, Manjil with lethal weapons. Manjil sustained severe injuries and died on the spot.

A case was filed with Sunderganj thana in this connection.

Transport strike called off

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 20: Transport strike along 18 routes in the southern districts has been called off from Saturday following a meeting between the Deputy Commissioner, Khulna and leaders of Transport Owners Association held on Friday night.

Owners and workers of passenger buses and trucks went on strike from September 15 following row over compensation for families of three Awami League (AL) leaders who were killed in a road accident on August 29. They were crushed under wheels of a Dhaka bound intercity bus at 8-30pm on August 29.

JCD workers cut tendons of BCL worker

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 20: A BCL worker of Mehendiganj thana in the district was admitted to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital on Saturday with severe injuries on his hand and feet.

According to police and local people, Enamul Haq, 20, a BCL worker of Mehendiganj thana was seriously injured when some JCD workers severed the tendons of Enamul's hands and feet by sharp lethal weapons as a sequel to previous enmity at Kadirabad of Lata union of Mehendiganj. The terrorists later kicked unconscious Enamul into the nearby pond and went away.

Netrakona BCL begins ORS preparation programme

NETRAKONA, Sept 20: A month-long programme of preparing oral saline (ORS) for flood victims began here on Saturday under the auspices of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Netrakona district unit, reports BSS.

Fazlur Rahman Khan, MP, a central working committee member of Bangladesh Awami League inaugurated the programme at a function held at the office of the Netrakona Government University College Students' Union.

Deputy Commissioner Ali Akbar Hussain Akhand, Civil Surgeon Dr Mattiur Rahman and Principal of Netrakona Government University College Abdul Jaill Munsahi were present at the inaugural function. President of BCL Netrakona district unit Prasanta Ray presided over the function.

The inaugural function was addressed, among others, by Vice President of BCL Netrakona district unit Gazi

Muzammel Hussain Tuku, Vice President (VP) of Netrakona Government University College Students Union Uzal Shah and General Secretary of BCL Netrakona district unit Zillur Rahman Numan.

Under the programme, at least 1,000 packets of oral saline will be prepared every day by several hundred BCL activists for the flood victims of the district.

Our Kushtia Correspondent reports: Setu, a non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) distributed prepared food among 160 families of Kushtia Sadar, 112 families of Mirpur, 396 families of Daulatpur and 154 families of Khoksa thanas recently.

People of Hatasa Haripur union of Sadar thana, Bahalbaria union of Mirpur thana, Chilmari and Philipnagar unions of Daulatpur thana and Ambaria union of Khoksa thana got the relief goods.

Diarrhoea claims 4 lives in Sylhet dist

SYLHET, Sept 20: Diarrhoea claimed four lives and affected 50 others in a village at Kanaihat thana here in the last few days, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said the dead were identified as Abul Kalam son of Abul Rahim, a seven-year-old son and a 10 year-old daughter of Abu Bakar and the wife of Late Mohammad Ali of Gachhbari Nayagram village.

The water-borne disease that broke out in the village in the last month took a serious turn recently and spreading fast.

Shortage of drinking water and malnutrition were said to be the main reasons behind the outbreak of the disease.

Local people demanded of the authorities concerned to provide medicare facilities in the affected areas.

Another report from Comilla says: Acute scarcity of drinking water in the remote areas of all the 12 thanas of Comilla district has been prevailing as a number of tube-wells went out of order due to

the prolonged flood.

Water-borne diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery have already broken out in different areas in an alarming proportion.

Official sources said, of the total 41,168 tube-wells in the district, some 2,164 went out of order due to the flood.

Of the total affected tube-wells, 808 completely went under flood water. The authorities have taken measures to raise the tube-wells to keep those operative.

Besides, 1,389 tube-wells, went out of operation due to various other reasons.

Local leaders said the people specially in the rural areas have been suffering much as a good number of tube-wells went out of operation.

The poor and flood affected people in many areas have been compelled to use contaminated waters from ponds and canals.

They have urged the authorities to take immediate steps to repair, re-sink or raise the affected tube-wells immediately to ensure supply of safe water.

Steps sought to implement Sureshwar dam project

SHARIATPUR, Sept 20: Additional foodgrains worth Tk 24 crore will be produced in the district per year if steps are taken to implement the Water Extraction and Sureshwar Embankment Project, reports UNB.

Water Development Board has submitted the project proposal to the Water Resources Ministry to bring a vast area under irrigation network during the dry season.

The project is expected to create employment opportunity for the landless farmers and poor women and to improve communication network.

Besides, Agriculture Extension Department and Rural Development Board can build proper institutional system under their regular programmes maintaining consistency with the project works, local experts said.

Environment at the project

areas will be free from pollution due to inclusion of tree plantation programme in the project, official sources said.

Crop production is being hampered here during both rainy and dry seasons. Waters of the overflowing rivers Padma and Kirtinasha wash away crops on a vast tract of land in rainy season and the fields cannot be brought under irrigation in dry season.

But if the project is implemented, the affected lands will be facilitated by water extraction in rainy season and irrigation in dry season.

Meanwhile, Water Resources Minister Abur Razzak gave assurance to the people of constructing the proposed embankment at Sureshwar.

The local leaders urged the higher authorities to implement the project immediately for making and district self-reliant in food production.



BRAHMANBARIA: Divisional Commissioner Shakawat Hussain recently distributed relief materials among the flood affected people of the district. —Star photo



CHANDPUR: Nazmul Kabir, a social worker distributing relief materials among the flood victims in different unions of Motlab thana. —Star photo



RANGPUR: Local NGO workers are engaged in distributing relief goods among the flood victims of Chilmari. —Star photo